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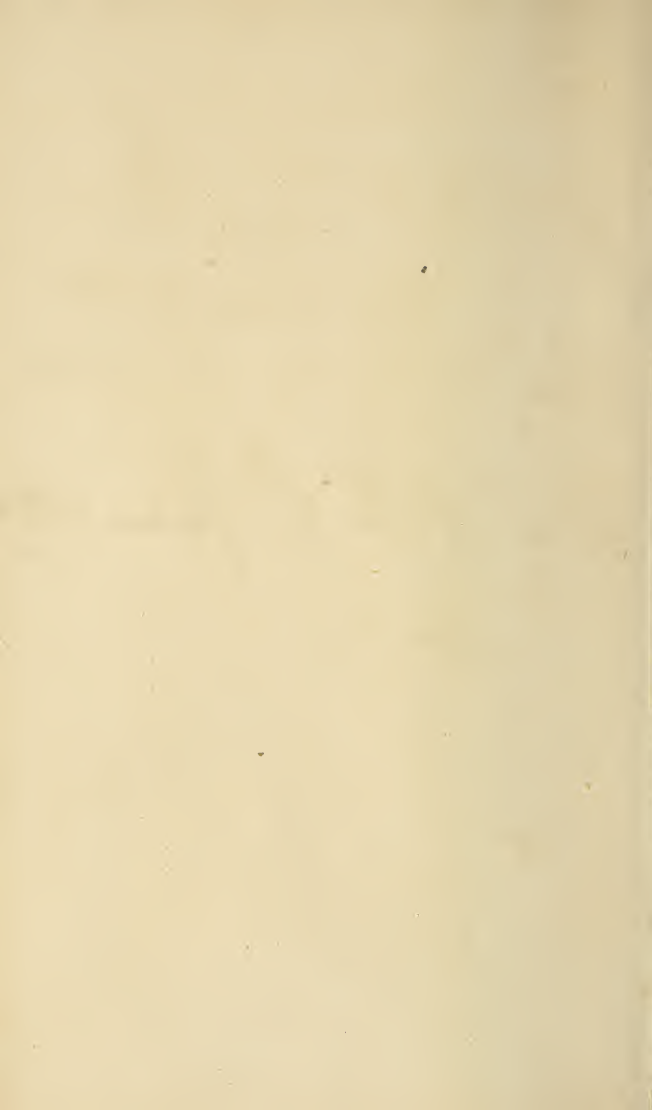
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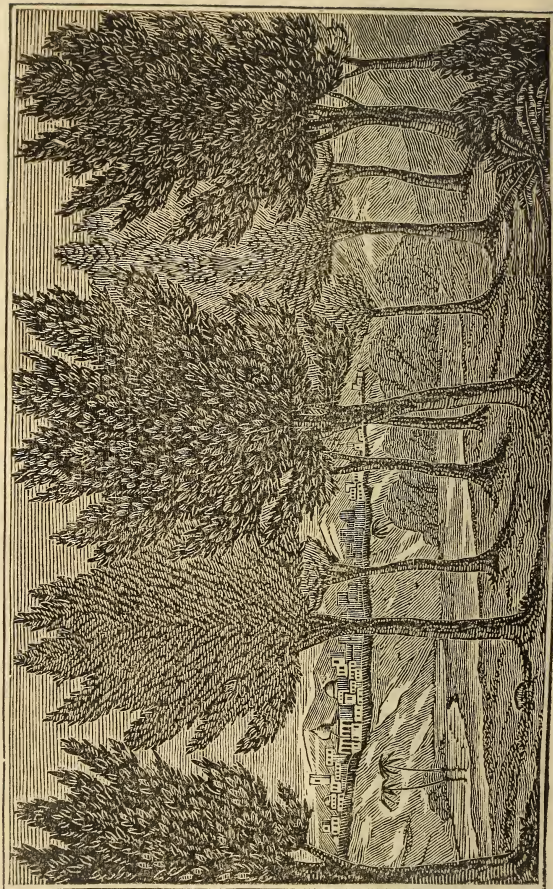
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GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE....See page 38.



LECTURES TO CHILDREN,
ON THE
LAST HOURS

OF OUR
LORD JESUS CHRIST.

"REDEMPTION! 'twas the labor of the skies."

213
By CHARLES A. GOODRICH.

✓
HARTFORD.

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PREFACE.

No narrative, perhaps, contains more points of thrilling interest, than that of the Evangelists, in the record they give of the closing scenes in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ. No one can hope to improve upon the beauty, simplicity, or interest of their account. This, the author has not had the arrogance to attempt. But to every attentive reader of the Evangelists, it will be apparent, that no one of them records a full account of the death and sufferings of Jesus Christ. Their narratives were written at different times, each succeeding writer adding somewhat to the account given by his predecessor. The true and full account of the last hours of the Son of God, is the sum total of what all the Evangelists have recorded, when faithfully compared, and drawn out in a connected statement. This comparison, children would find it difficult to make ; and even "children of a larger growth," might find it interest-

ing and profitable to peruse an account, in which the principal circumstances are related in the order, in which they transpired. But the work has been prepared especially for "children of a smaller growth;" and, as was natural, such observations and reflections are interspersed, as were deemed necessary, either to a better understanding of the narrative, or important by way of moral impression and improvement.

In respect to points, in which the Evangelists have been supposed by some not precisely to agree, the author has endeavored to obviate such difficulties, where he could do it, without elaborate discussion. In relation to the explanation of some facts, it is well known, that the most respectable authorities differ. Those explanations, which appeared most natural and consistent, have been adopted. After all, it is quite probable, that some may differ from the author, as to the opinions, he has adopted. Should this be so, all he asks is a candid comparison of the narrative of the Evangelists; and if, at length, those opinions should be found to be unsupported, let his errors be charged to his head, rather than to his heart.

The work, it will be obvious, is not designed for children of a very early age. The nature of some

of the subjects seemed not to admit of being reduced to a level with their comprehension, but at the sacrifice of dignity and propriety. A familiar style has been adopted, and familiar illustrations admitted; but the hope is indulged, that nothing derogatory to a high and sublime subject will be found to have a place.

In conclusion, if the work shall have the effect to awaken in the minds of children gratitude to a Saviour, who died for them, and lead them to consecrate themselves to his service and glory, the chief object of the author will have been attained. That that this may be the result of his labors, he offers his prayers to HIM, who by his death purchased the Spirit, and has sent that Spirit down, to "convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of a judgment to come."

INTRODUCTION.

CONTENTS.—Story of a boy. He becomes wicked—leaves his parents—goes to sea—is shipwrecked—is thrown upon a desolate island—suffers from hunger, &c.—is taken off by a humane captain—reaches home. Application of the story. Children more indebted to Christ than the boy was to the captain. The soul in danger. Proof that children are wicked. Instance of a boy. All in a state of condemnation. How God can save sinners. Instance of a brother suffering for another brother. Christ suffered for sinners. His death creates a debt of gratitude, which we can never pay.

MY DEAR CHILDREN,

I HAVE a story to tell to you, about a boy. I will tell it, as nearly as I am able to recollect it. The story will help me to impress upon you a very solemn truth, which I wish you to keep in mind, while you read the present volume.

There was once a boy, who had a good home, and kind parents. These parents loved their son, and did all in their power to make him happy. He was well fed and clothed, and

Leaves his father's house.

had every comfort and indulgence, which he ought to have desired.

One would think, that such a boy would have loved such a home, and would have tried to please his parents. For a time, he did so. He was kind and faithful and obedient; and every body thought, that he would continue well disposed, and grow up to be a wise and respectable man.

But it did not prove so. After a time, his conduct was changed. He lost his regard for truth, and often indulged in wicked language; he was unkind to his companions, and disobedient to his parents. At length, he resolved to abandon his father's house, and go to sea. His parents wept over him, and begged him not to act so unkindly, and especially not to forsake them, and the good home he had.

But their counsels were to no purpose. He would go. And one day, getting into a passion about some trifle, he packed up his clothes, and suddenly left his father's house. He

Goes to sea.Unhappy.

scarcely knew which way to go; but directed his course to a certain town, not far distant, where was a vessel about to sail on a whaling voyage, in which he hoped to get a berth.

When he reached the wharf, the vessel was nearly ready. So he applied to the captain to take him. The captain inquired who he was, and whether he had liberty to go. By telling a number of falsehoods, he made out a fair story, and the captain told him to come on board, and wait upon him.

The sails not long after were hoisted; and, with a fair wind, they put to sea. She was a fine ship, and sailed well. For a time, all things were prosperous. The sky was clear—the wind fair—and all on board appeared quite joyful—except one.

That one was the boy, about whom I am telling you. He was far from being happy. How *could* he be happy? Oh! no, that was impossible. He had acted a wicked part. He had abused his kind parents—had left his

A storm.

home—had obtained his present place by falsehood; and, whenever asked about his parents, and place of abode, he was obliged to tell other falsehoods to keep up a fair story. Such a boy happy! No, indeed—with such a heart as he had—and such wicked conduct as he had shown, how could he be happy?

Yet, unhappy as he was, he had no desire to return home. He had no wish to become better. But every day he grew bolder in sin, and resolved never more to return—for he had no wish to confess the wrong he had done.

At length, one day, when they had sailed some weeks, a dark cloud appeared to rise upon them. The captain watched it. He felt anxious. “We shall have a blow,” said he, “all hands to your posts.” Every one sprang at his bidding. The sails were reefed—the ropes were stayed—every thing was lashed strong and tight. The cloud came over, and the storm began its blast. For three days the wind continued to rage—the billows

The shipwreck.

tossed and foamed, and dashed abroad and around.

At length, about midnight of the third day, the roar of the waters breaking upon rocks was distinctly heard. Nothing could be done. "We are lost—we are lost," exclaimed the captain, as the sound broke upon his ear. And, at that instant, the ship made a plunge upon a reef, a short distance from the shore. A wave followed, which swept the whole crew into the sea—all of whom found a watery grave—but one. That one was the boy.

It was wonderful, that he alone should have escaped. But so it was. The wave which swept the captain and seamen to the bottom, bore him forward with great swiftness, and left him almost senseless on the shore. That wave went back, and before another returned, he was just able to get beyond its reach.

Here he lay till morning—wet, cold, and stiff;—and when the day came, he was scarce-

The desolate island.

ly able to walk, by reason of the bruises, which he had received. But as the sun shed down his warm and refreshing beams, he rose and looked abroad. What were his feelings! He found himself on a small, desolate island; and on every side of him, the billows of the ocean were rolling in awful grandeur. The ship had gone to pieces, and its fragments were tumbling upon the shore, and among them he could perceive several of the dead bodies of her crew.

A faintness came over him, as he dwelt upon the scene. His heart was desolate. Ah! what should he now do? Where should he obtain food? Where find shelter by night? Here, far from home and friends, he must pine away and die. Home! he had fled from a home, for which he ought every day to have been thankful. Parents! he had ill-treated the kindest parents on earth, and had left them in a fit of passion.

And, now, how justly was he punished!

No hope.A ship at anchor.

God was leaving him to anxiety and distress, to show him how wicked he had been. Several days passed. In the clefts of some rocks by the shore, he found a few shell-fish, which served to sustain him. But every day he grew weaker for want of food;—but these sufferings were small in comparison with his distress, on account of his past conduct, and future prospects. But what could he do? From what quarter now look for help? He groaned and wept. He dragged his feeble limbs from one rock to another—he looked around—he gazed on the ocean, till his weary eyes could gaze no longer—and often did he sink down in hopeless despair.

One morning, after a night of more than usual anxiety and distress, he rose and creeping forth from beneath a rock under which, he had found a shelter—he looked abroad. But what were his emotions! At a little distance from the shore, lay a *ship at anchor!* His heart beat violently. His whole frame tremb-

The only chance.

led. "God of my fathers," he exclaimed, "praised be thy name." But immediately he thought—"Will God, indeed, be merciful? Will he forgive a wretch like me? Help is near—but will it avail me? Can I make the captain discover me? Will he regard me with pity? Will he send a boat and take me on board?"

Hope inspired him with unwonted strength. Could he gain a certain higher point of land, not far distant, perhaps he might be seen. It was his only chance. He put forth all his powers. With the help of a stick, which served him as a staff, he at last succeeded. Here, taking his handkerchief, he tied it to the stick, and waved it as he was able, in full view of the ship. For a time, no one saw him. His heart sickened to its core; and, bursting into tears, he exclaimed, "It is all in vain!" But just at that instant, he saw several persons advancing to the side of the vessel. He now felt sure that they discovered

The rescue.

him. Presently, a gun was fired, and then a second and a third. It was the promise of relief, and he almost died from joy.

Shortly after, a boat was seen putting off, and making for the shore. In a little time she landed. He would have rushed to the place, and been ready to meet his deliverers. But this was impossible. His strength, through the joy and agitation of his heart was gone;—and in the same spot he lay, until the seamen came, and bore him in their arms to the boat; and in the bottom he lay, till she reached the ship.

I will only add, that the humane captain did all in his power to restore his exhausted frame. During the voyage, he did recover. And after a long and circuitous passage, in which he was several times again nearly lost, he, at length, reached his father's house. Here, like the prodigal mentioned in the gospel, he confessed his sins, with many tears, and was welcomed by his parents as a son, who was supposed to be "dead, but was alive,"—who "was lost, and was found."

A solemn question.

And now, my children, I have a question to ask you, and I wish you to consider it. It is this, "Can you think of a human being, who could be under greater obligations of *gratitude*, than that boy was to the captain, who saved him?"

Can you think of *one*? Perhaps you cannot. But I can. I can think of hundreds, and I might name them. But I will name only *you*.

Us! us!—what, us children!—we under greater obligations of gratitude than this boy? and pray, sir, to *whom*? and on *what account*?

I will tell you. You are under far greater obligations to the LORD JESUS CHRIST than that boy was, or could be to the humane captain. Yes, as much greater, as your souls are of more worth than the body; as much greater, as eternity is longer than time.

Does this surprise you? But it is even so, children, and, if you will attend, I will endeavor to convince you.

The body may die.The soul never.

You have *bodies* and *souls*. The body you know must one day die. It may die soon. Children often die, and their little bodies are laid in the grave, and moulder away. But the soul never dies—no, *never*. That will live *forever*.

Now, of how much more value must that be which never dies, than that which must one day die, and may die at any moment. The body without the soul is of little use. That you know. It feels nothing of itself—knows nothing. It cannot walk—it cannot move—it cannot enjoy.

Now, look at it. The boy of whom I have told you, had a body and a soul. Had his body died on the desolate island, his soul would still have lived. It was, indeed, a matter of thankfulness, that the captain saved his body from dying. And he did feel grateful. But suppose his soul had been in danger of being lost forever,—that is, of being miserable

What is the body to the soul ?

forever, and some one had come and saved *that*, and made him happy forever, would he not have had greater cause of thankfulness to that person, than to the captain, who saved only his body ?

Ah ! children, there is no telling how much more grateful one should be, for the salvation of the *soul*, than of the body. Suppose the house in which you live takes fire—you would feel grateful to the person, who should put out the fire, and save the house. But how much more thankful ought you to be, if you yourselves were likely to be burned up, should he rush in, and rescue *you* ? You might regret, the loss of your house ; but if you were saved, you would think comparatively little of that. Now, the body is the house, in which the soul lives. It is only its lodging place, and it has a value while your soul lives in it, and because the soul does live in it. But what is the house, in comparison with its inhabitants ? And what is the body, in comparison with the soul ? While

The soul in danger.

the soul resides in the body, you should, indeed, be grateful to any one who saves the body, if exposed to die; but how much more thankful I repeat, should you be to one, who saves the soul, when that is in danger of eternal death?

But is the soul in such danger?

Yes, indeed, it is. It is in danger of eternal death. I do not mean by this, that the soul can die, as does the body—but I mean that it may be *forever miserable*. This is called eternal death.

And the soul is in danger of this. And this danger arises from the *evil*, which it has done in the world. All do wrong. There is no one that lives, and does not sin. This is as true of children, as of grown persons. They may not sin as much, nor as vilely; but they do sin, and they sin early. For example, children often deceive, when God bids them speak the truth. They quarrel, when they should live in peace. They play on the Sabbath, when they should “remember” that day

Children wicked early.

and "keep it holy." They disobey their parents, when they should honor and love them. And they love their toys and trifles, even more than the great God himself.

It is wonderful how wicked some children are. They become wicked, at a very early age. A short time since, a boy in the State of Maine was sent to the State Prison, for nine years. He was but twelve years of age; yet, though so young, he was guilty of cruelty towards another boy, about seven years of age, which shocked all the people, in that part of the country. I will briefly tell you how it was. The older boy whose name was Mitchell, one day, asked the younger boy to go with him, and get some flags. They had not proceeded far, when Mitchell threw him down, and began to pound him. A woman hearing the little boy cry, ran to his relief, rescued him, and sent him home. Before he reached home, however, Mitchell overtook him, and dragged him to a pond, and threw

Story.

him in. The little boy contrived to get out of the water, upon which Mitchell pulled off his clothes, and tied his hands and feet to a tree. Next, he made him eat brakes and box-berry leaves, and put a large handful of mud into his mouth; and then whipped him, because he could not swallow it. Next, he dragged him to a tree, which had been blown down, and put him under the roots of it. Then, he struck him with a club over his nose, and when the poor little boy put his hand to his nose, he struck him again, because he did so. Again, he carried him to the brook, and putting his head under water, threatened to drown him. But the whole story is too painful to be told. I will therefore only add what the little boy said, when he was examined before the court. I will give it in his own words. "Mitchell said, he was going to give me a hundred blows, and bid me count them. I counted when he counted. We counted thirty-eight together, and then I

Story.

counted further, and skipped some—he whipped me over the legs about thirty blows after this. He used as many as six sticks, if not more—the sticks were about as big as my finger, the butt ends were larger. He broke up all the sticks in beating me. I was tied by my hands all this time, naked. The trees to which I was tied, were about as big round as my leg. He did not tell me what he was going to do. When he got me to the water, he both times held me down—put my face in the water, and held it down. I could not see how he stood. He put the leaves and brakes into my mouth, when I was tied. I then lay with my back on some brush-wood.”

What a shocking proof is here of a wicked disposition! But you say, perhaps, that all children are not thus wicked. O no, I hope there are but few. But, then, one such case shows what a child *may* do. And, though you think you could never be thus cruel, you might be, if you had not parents, or friends to bring you up to know better.

What children may do.

You have wicked *hearts*, and there is no telling what wicked deeds they would not prompt you to do, were you left to yourselves. Settle it, then, children, that you all sin—sin early, and often sin in your hearts—in your thoughts—in your wishes, far more than you suspect.

Now, then, how does the great God regard sinners? Does he approve of their conduct? By no means. He “is angry with the wicked every day.” His holy law condemns them all—even children, for the evil which they have done. And should God punish them, as they deserve, they would be miserable forever. The Catechism says, “Every sin deserves God’s wrath and curse, both in this life, and that which is to come.” And the Bible says, “Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things, written in the book of the law, to do them.” And it further says, “The soul that sinneth, it shall die;” that is, it shall be miserable forever.

You will ask me, then, perhaps, will God

Will God save any ?

save any ? Can he save any, and be a God of truth ? He has said, “the soul that sinneth, *it* shall die.” How then can he save any one ?

This is, indeed, a solemn question. I do not wonder that you ask it. I do not wonder that it should trouble you. But attend, and I will explain what plan God has adopted, that he may be just and true, and yet save all who are willing to forsake sin, and be saved.

Suppose a king makes a law, that if any one of his subjects commits murder, he shall be put to death. Shortly after, a man is taken up for this very crime. He is brought before a court, where murder is proved against him. By the law of the king, he must suffer death, and the judge passes sentence, and fixes the day for his execution.

Before that day arrives, however, a brother of the man condemned goes to the king, and says, “Sir, I am a brother of the man condemned for murder. Your law is a good one. It must be enforced. My brother is guilty,

A case supposed.

and ought to suffer death. But will your majesty allow *me to suffer in his stead?*”

The king thinks. He says, “This man is not guilty ; but his brother is. But if he is willing to suffer *for* his brother, what evil will arise ? My subjects will still see, and feel, that the law is *good*, and that it will be *enforced*. The *guilty* one ought to die ; but if this man is willing to suffer for his brother, the *same purpose will be answered.*”

Thus the king reasons. And, as he made the law, he has a right so far to alter it, as to allow one to die for another. One must die. This the king cannot alter, and be a man of truth ; but he may be a man of truth, and consent that one, if he be willing, should die for another.

Now, my children, very much such a plan was adopted by the infinite God, that mankind might be saved. He had said “The soul that sinneth, it shall die ;” that is, be punished forever—sinners were to go down to hell, and be tormented to all eternity.

Christ offers to die for sinners.

Not that God was desirous that they should thus suffer; he would take no pleasure in their eternal ruin. But what should be done? The law, which forbade sin, was a good one. It must be enforced. But if enforced, how could any of mankind be saved? How could it be done? Ah! that was a question, which Gabriel could not have answered.

But Jesus, the Son of God, could answer the question. He knew how it could be done. He came forward, and offered to descend to earth, and suffer for the children of men. He would step in, and, by dying on the cross, would show how good the law was, which forbid sin, and that it must be enforced. This he was willing to do. Though "rich," he was willing to become "poor;" though honored, he was willing to suffer shame; though happy, and blessed, he was willing to endure sorrow, and even death itself, if men might be saved. This, his love and compassion prompted him to do. The poet has beautifully said:

A glorious plan.

So Jesus thought on dying man,
When throned above the sky ;
And mid th' embraces of his God,
He felt compassion rise.

This, then, was the plan adopted by God, that salvation might be offered to mankind. The same ends are answered by the death of Christ, that would have been answered, had all mankind suffered to all eternity. This plan, God, as a God of truth, could, with propriety, adopt. He could not repeal his law. He could not pass by sin. It must be punished. But another might suffer, in the room of sinners, and thus a foundation be laid to offer pardon to all such, as would repent and believe on Christ.

This was a glorious plan. Indeed, it was. Angels thought so, for when Christ, at length, was born, in Bethlehem, with what joy did a company of angels come from heaven to announce the delightful tidings!

Song of Bethlehem.Jesus born.

Down through the portals of the sky,
Th' impetuous torrent ran ;
And angels flew with eager joy,
To bear the news to man.

And how they did sing ! Never was there such an anthem on earth before. When God had finished the creation, "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." That was a song of wonder and delight. But, when the angels sung on the plains of Bethlehem, there was *heavenly love* mingled with the song. They sung as they sing in heaven ; and well they might sing ; and I hope, my children, that you may one day be there, and sing a song which angels can never sing, because they never sinned, and were never redeemed.

Jesus Christ, as I said, was born in Bethlehem, in Judea, a country in Asia. He was the Son of God. He descended from heaven. He came to suffer, and die for the children of men. He lived on earth thirty-three or thir-

Had not Christ died.

ty-four years. During all this period, he suffered much, as you may learn, by reading the story of his life.

It is no part of my design to relate the particulars of his life. But I shall confine myself to scenes, which took place a little before his crucifixion. I wish to show you what he suffered, and how he suffered ; and I wish you to remember, children, that he suffered for *you*, as well as for others. Had he not come from heaven—had he not died on the cross—not a single one of all the children of men could ever have been saved. The holy law of God would have been put in force ; and by that law all, without exception, would have sunk to ruin. The law itself knows nothing of mercy—thinks nothing of mercy. The language of the law is, “Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law *to do* them.” Nothing is here said about pardon for sin.

The *gospel* alone tells how sin may be par-

A delightful debt.

doned—how souls may be prepared for heavenly glory.

This remedy did wisdom find,
To heal diseases of the mind ;
This sovereign balm, whose virtues can
Restore the ruin'd creature, man.

The *gospel* bids the dead revive ;
Sinners obey the voice and live ;
Dry bones are raised and clothed afresh,
And hearts of stone are turned to flesh.

Read, then, children, the following pages ; and remember, while you read them, that to Jesus you owe a debt of gratitude, which you can never pay. You may employ a whole eternity in paying that debt, and it will continue to *increase*, through every moment of it. But it will be a delightful debt ; you will be joyful in paying it, and happy to see it increase. But enter upon the payment of it *now*. You cannot begin too soon. You can never praise Jesus enough. If you love him as you ought,

How vain are mortal airs.

you will wish to praise him, in a higher and still sweeter note, every month and year of your lives. And when you have raised that song as high as you are able, you will wish to raise it still higher; and, after all your efforts, we shall hear you exclaim—not as you hang your harps upon the willows—but as you sweep them strong and full—we shall hear you exclaim :

Who shall fulfil this boundless song ?
The theme surmounts an angel's tongue ;
How low, how vain, are mortal airs,
When Gabriel's nobler harp despairs.

LECTURE I.

GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE.

CONTENTS.—Situation and description of the garden of Gethsemane. Christ and his disciples assemble there, the evening before his crucifixion. A most solemn time with them. Manner in which they had spent the afternoon. Passover. Washing of the disciple's feet. Communication by Jesus that one would betray him. Departure of Judas. Lord's Supper. Discourse of Jesus to his disciples. His wonderful affection.

LET us suppose ourselves in Judea, upon a mountain in that country, called the *Mount of Olives*. Look round, and observe the prospect.

The top and sides of the mountain are thinly covered with Olive trees, which give name to the mountain itself. To the west of us, about one mile, you have a fine view of the splendid city of Jerusalem—once splendid, I mean, when the temple of God was in its glory, and when the tribes of Israel went up there

to worship. Between us and the city, at the foot of the mount, flows a small stream, called *Kidron*, or *Cedron*. In summer, this stream dries up; but in autumn, it is swelled by the rains, and runs southerly into the Dead Sea.

About half way down the mountain towards Jerusalem, is the celebrated *Garden of Gethsemane*. Let us enter, and examine it.

It is a quiet and beautiful spot, you see; and from it you have a good view of the city. This garden, it is supposed, formerly belonged to some wealthy man in the city. It was more like a grove, or plantation, than like the gardens of the present day. A recent traveller tells us, that there are now but nine olive trees in this garden. But once, it abounded with them, and also with other trees. In June, the Olive trees were wont to blossom; at which time, they produced an abundance of white flowers, rendering the spot, as a place of retirement from the noise and bustle of the city, inviting and delightful.

Affecting story.

There is a sad and affecting story connected with this garden. Let us seat ourselves, and I will tell it.

In this garden, one evening, about eighteen hundred years ago, a small company was collected. Who were they? and why were they here?

The company consisted of Jesus Christ, and eleven of his disciples. He had twelve disciples you know; but, on that evening, one of them, Judas Iscariot, was absent. I will presently tell you why.

Jesus and his little company of disciples had come into the garden, for the purpose of meditation and prayer, for it was a most solemn time with them.

But, why so solemn?

It was a solemn time with them, because a dreadful event was about to happen. Jesus well knew what it was. The disciples had only faint conceptions of it, although Jesus had often spoken to them about it. They saw their

Judas turns traitor.

master sad, and they became gloomy and sad also. They would have been more sad, had they *realised* what was at that time going on in the city. Judas was there with the enemies of Christ, and was contriving with them, how they might *seize* and *destroy* him. At that very hour, they were together consulting. Judas was agreeing for the sum of thirty pieces of silver to betray his Lord and master. A Jewish piece of silver was worth about one of our half dollars; so you see, that for the poor pittance of *fifteen dollars*, Judas turned traitor, and betrayed the Son of God.

Jesus knew, that evening, what this faithless disciple was about, for he knew all things. He foresaw how it would be. His enemies would seize, and condemn him. They would do this, notwithstanding his innocence. He would have no one to support him—not a single friend near to give him an affectionate look, or speak a comforting word. But he would stand alone ; and on the following day, before

Jesus enters the Garden.Passover.

the setting of the sun, he should hang on the cross and die. What a serious and solemn hour it was with him then ! For his coming trial and trouble, he wished to be prepared. He had some things to say to his disciples, to prepare them also for the sorrow, which should come upon them. He entered the garden, therefore—a spot which he had often visited before, and which more than any other place was calculated to soothe his troubled spirit.

But in order to understand what took place shortly after their entering into the garden, it is necessary that I should notice some events, which occurred the previous afternoon.

That afternoon, he had spent with his disciples in the city. In a retired chamber, they had met; and there he had enjoyed a mournful, and yet a delightful interview with them. It was the last which would be allowed before his death. There they celebrated the Passover ; and there he washed and wiped

Washes his disciples' feet.

their feet, an account of which you may read in John xiii. 4—10. I scarcely know anything more affecting than this. How humble ! how condescending ! how affectionate ! While they were eating, he rose and laid aside his mantle. Then, he took a towel, and girded himself, and began to wash their feet. This was the appropriate business of *slaves* in that country. Oh ! how could the Son of God stoop so low ! Think of it. He had been accustomed to the honors and homage of all heaven. Even Gabriel had delighted to cast his crown at his feet. Could this be the Son of God ? How different from the kings of this world ! What earthly monarch ever stooped so low ! Yet, it was not too low for the Prince of Peace. He wished to show his disciples how humble they should be, and how much love and kindness, they should show one another, after he was gone.

It was a wonderful transaction; but most wonderful was it, that he should wash the feet

Washes the feet of Judas.Peter objects.

of *Judas Iscariot* ! He was with them at that time. He had no love for the Saviour. He had already made several attempts to betray him. He was still determined to do it. In a few hours, he *would* do it. This Jesus knew. Yet, he made no distinction. Ah ! this was wonderful humility. What the feelings of Judas were, I cannot tell ; but he made no objection, and so hardened was he, that he probably betrayed no guilt.

There was one, however, that did object. This was Peter. When Jesus came to him, in strong language, and with strong feelings, he said, "Thou shalt never wash my feet." He felt that it was too humble a service for the Son of God. It was beneath him—so Peter thought, until Christ explained what he meant by it, and then Peter was willing to be washed *all over*.

While celebrating the Passover, another interesting scene occurred. While eating, in a

One shall betray me!

solemn and yet tender manner, he told them that one of them should *betray* him.

They started with surprise, and alarm. They looked round upon one another. What could Jesus mean? Betray him! one of his own friends—his dear disciples betray him! sorrow filled their hearts, and each one began to inquire, “Lord is it I?” Without telling them which one it was, he again assured them that one would do it.

At this time, Simon Peter privately beckoned to John, who sat next to Jesus, to ask him, who it was. John leaning back upon the bosom of Jesus, *secretly* asked him the question. Jesus replied, that it was he, to whom he would give a sop, or morsel of bread, when he should have dipped it into sauce, which was used at the passover. Having thus dipped it, he gave it to Judas. At this time, no one knew but John himself, which of the disciples it was.

Master, is it I ?

About this time, when all the others had made the inquiry, "Lord is it I?" Judas himself put a similar question, "Master is it I?" Oh! how could he put such a question? When he knew what was in his heart—when the very purpose was formed there to betray his Master, how could he assume the boldness to make such an inquiry? I will tell you why he did. He wished to *conceal* his purpose. The other disciples had asked the question, and should he remain silent, it would be known, that he was the man. But did he not know that Jesus was acquainted with the heart? Perhaps not. At least, this was doubtless his hope. But he mistook. The searching eye of Jesus penetrated his soul; he read his thoughts and designs. And, now, plainly, did he answer the hollow question of his faithless disciple. "Thou hast said;" which in the language of the Jews, was "*Yes*,"—thou hast spoken the truth. It is so. Thou art the man. That Jesus well understood the inten-

Judas retires.

His plan.

tions of Judas is certain; for, after he had given him the sop, as I told you, he said to him, "That thou doest, do quickly." This the other disciples heard, but they knew not the meaning. They supposed that as Judas carried the provision, or travelling bag, Jesus was giving him directions for procuring further supplies of food. But Judas well understood from it, that his plan was known to Christ. He saw, also, that the other disciples would soon know it; and, that, unless he immediately went about it, he should lose the reward, which the Jews, from time to time, had promised him.

Upon this, Judas rose, and in wrath retired. He was vexed, that his purpose was known. Like a wicked man, he was even more determined to effect it. He hastened, therefore, to meet the enemies of Jesus. He did meet them. He told them his plan. He agreed what price they should pay him. They handed him thirty pieces of silver—fifteen dollars!

Lord's Supper.

and for this poor, pitiful sum, he agreed to head the band, and deliver his Master into their hands.

Soon after the departure of Judas, a most interesting transaction took place. Jesus wished that in some appropriate way, his disciples, and all who should believe on his name, should *remember* him. He now, therefore, instituted, or founded the *Lord's Supper*. This was done *after Judas had departed*, and at the close of the Passover. Taking some bread, he sought the blessing of God upon it, in a prayer. He then broke the bread, and, handing a piece to each disciple, bid him eat it, telling him that he meant it should represent his body, which would soon be broken, or wounded on the cross. Then, taking a cup, which contained some wine, he gave thanks to God ; and, passing it round, he told them to drink of it, for it was intended to represent his blood, which would soon be shed upon the cross for them, and all mankind. In conclusion, he

What a solemn scene!

united with them in singing a hymn of praise to God.

What a solemn scene! What a mournful, and yet delightful time! what love did he feel for them. What communion did they hold with him. It was the last similar interview, he should have with them. He was about to leave them; but he would not leave them comfortless. They might remember him in the same feast, when he was gone; and when they should be thus assembled, he would come unto them by his Spirit, and would commune with them. This he would do also in respect to all, who should believe on his name.

You have, perhaps, often seen the Lord's Supper celebrated. It is celebrated now in the same manner, in which Christ celebrated it. It has been celebrated ever since that evening, at times, by those who have loved Jesus. The late Dr. Watts has composed a beautiful and affecting hymn, which is often sung at the close of the sacramental service:

Do this till time shall end.

'Twas on that dark and doleful night,
When powers of earth and hell arose
Against the Son of God's delight,
And friends betrayed him to his foes :

Before the mournful scene began,
He took the bread, and bless'd and brake ;
What love through all his actions ran !
What wond'rous words of grace he spake.

*This is my body broke for sin,
Receive and eat the living food ;*
Then took the cup and bless'd the wine ;
'Tis the new covenant in my blood.

Do this (he cried) till time shall end,
In memory of your dying friend ;
Meet at my table and record
The love of your departed Lord.

While Jesus and his disciples were celebrating this supper, Jesus spoke many things to them, with all the affection and tenderness of a friend, and father. "Little children," said he, (John xiii. 33, &c.) "yet a little while—

I will not deny thee.

for a few short hours, I shall be with you, after which I shall go from you; and, for the present, you cannot follow me; but you shall see me again. Our separation will be but short. In the mean time, love one another. As I have loved you, tenderly, constantly, and unto the end, so, my disciples, do you love one another."

While he was thus tenderly addressing them, Peter expressed a wish that he might go with Jesus *then*. "Lord," said he, "why cannot I follow thee *now*, I will lay down my life for thy sake." Ah! how little Peter knew of the trial, through which he was soon to pass. How little did he know of the power of temptation, and of the treachery of the heart. He did, indeed, love Jesus most ardently. At that moment, he would have sacrificed any thing. Jesus was with him. His heart was warmed. His love was kindled. He felt strong.—"Though I should die with thee," said he, "yet will I not deny thee." You feel strong,

Thou shalt deny me thrice.

said Jesus, and your love is ardent; but before the cock shall crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice.

In the same affectionate manner, Jesus continued his discourse. "Let not your heart be troubled, believe on God, believe also on me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I do not deceive you. No; I am going to leave you, for a short season, for the purpose of preparing a place for you. And be assured, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, and where I dwell, you may eternally abide." John xiv.

How comforting must these assurances have been to the disciples! Jesus knew that they would need comfort. He knew this better than they could know, at this time. They understood, after all, very imperfectly what was going to take place. Had they fully understood it, they would not have been able to sustain themselves. Jesus well knew this; and,

How tender Jesus was.

therefore, he unfolded the subject gradually to them ; and, after all, told them but in part. And, as he conducted them along in his discourse, his heart seemed to overflow with the purest affection for them.

What a wonder it was, that he could so much forget himself ! During all this time, he knew perfectly well, what he was about to suffer. Yet, such was his regard for his disciples, that he appeared to think little of his personal troubles. He wished to have them prepared. He would provide for their consolation. For them and their good, he could deny himself—forget himself—and, even in the prospect of crucifixion, appear calm and composed.

Oh ! what a sweet and affectionate disposition Jesus had. How mild he appeared ! How tender ! How benevolent ! Children, can you help loving one, who was so full of love, and was so amiable and lovely ? How can you help going to him in prayer, and telling him,

Will you not sing his praises ?

that you do, and will love him better than father, or mother, or brother, or sister. And will you not, if you can sing—will you not sing his praises ? I hope what I write for your benefit will prompt you to sing the two following verses in the spirit of little Christians :

Now be my heart inspir'd to sing
The glories of my Saviour King,
Jesus the Lord ; how heavenly fair
His form ! How bright his beauties are !

O'er all the sons of human race,
He shines with a superior grace :
Love from his lips divinely flows ;
And blessings all his state compose.

LECTURE II.

GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE.

CONTENTS.—Retirement of Jesus to the Mount of Olives. His prayer there. Observations. Enters the garden. Withdraws for prayer with Peter, James, and John. Manifestation of great sorrow. Heaviness of the disciples. Agony of Jesus. Appearance of Judas, and the band. Jesus taken. Observations.

I CONCLUDED my last lecture by telling you how Christ instituted the Lord's Supper, and what he said to his disciples, while they were at the table. I did not tell you all he said; but you can read it in the fourteenth chapter of John. When he had finished his comforting advice, he concluded by saying, "Arise, let us go hence."

It was now about midnight. They had been together some hours; and a delightful, and yet mournful time they had had. He now conducted them to the Mount of Olives; and as

God always hears Jesus Christ.

they proceeded thither, he continued to talk to them, and said, it is supposed, the things, which the apostle John has recorded in the fifteenth and sixteenth chapters of his epistle. When they had reached some part of the mountain, Jesus offered a prayer, which you can read in the seventeenth chapter of John. I hope my children you will read that prayer, and you will learn how affectionately he commended his disciples to his Father, in heaven. He prayed, that God would keep them, and that he would keep all, who should believe on his name, in all periods of the world. He prayed for all, who should become Christians. And, if you become Christians, he prayed for you. And among other things, he prayed, that when you die, you may go where he is, and behold his glory. God always heard the prayers of Jesus Christ, and will grant all that he asked ; so you may be sure, my children, that if you become Christians, this prayer will be answered for you ;

Heaven.

and should you die, even while you are young, Jesus will take you to himself. You will go to Heaven—to that bright and pleasant abode, where there is no sin, and no sorrow. There, no sun shines, nor moon ; and yet there is no darkness there, and no clouds, and no storms, nor tempests. God himself is the light of Heaven. There blossoms the tree of life—there flows forever the waters of life, from the throne of God. What a blessed abode must it be ! How beautifully does Dr. Watts describe it :

O'er all those wide extended plains
Shines one eternal day ;
There God, the sun, forever reigns,
And scatters night away.

No chilling winds or poisonous breath
Can reach that healthful shore ;
Sickness and sorrow, pain and death,
Are feared and felt no more.

The disciples who heard that prayer on the

When shall I reach that happy place?

Mount of Olives must have been comforted by it, and it has been answered in respect to them. They have gone to Heaven. They are now actually there, and are beholding the glory of their blessed Master. Jesus prayed that they might behold it, and they do behold it. And there are thousands of others, who have become Christians, who are beholding it also, and in answer to this prayer of our Lord Jesus. And among them, there are doubtless many children like yourselves. And have you no wish to join them? Are you not willing to forsake sin, and love and serve Christ, that you may one day become the delighted inhabitants of that pure and happy abode? Methinks I almost hear you break forth into a song of inquiry :

When shall I reach that happy place,
And be forever blest ?
When shall I see my Father's face,
And in his bosom rest ?

Sit down while I go and pray yonder.

When Jesus had ended this prayer, about which I have told you, he led his disciples into the Garden of Gethsemane, and here a scene took place, the like of which was never seen in this world.

I have told you that Christ came to suffer in the room of mankind. They were all condemned to eternal misery. Jesus offered to suffer and die, so that God might pardon, and save all, who would believe on his name—who would repent of their sins, and live holy and obedient lives.

Jesus did suffer and die on the cross, and it was there especially that he atoned for sin. But he also suffered through his whole life, and especially in the Garden of Gethsemane; about this I will now tell you. On reaching the Garden, he told his disciples to sit down, while he should go a short distance, for the purpose of prayer. He requested three of his disciples, Peter, James and John to accompany him. These three were peculiarly

Jesus in his glory.In his sorrow.

dear to him. He loved all his disciples, but in several instances he had shown these three peculiar favor. I will mention a single instance, viz : his transfiguration on the Mount, (Mat. xvii.) at which time, he underwent a surprisingly glorious change, and *perhaps* appeared as he does now, exalted on the right hand of the throne of God. These three disciples were with him at that time, and there they saw all this glory, and they saw, too, Moses and Elias, who had come down from Heaven, to talk with him. What they said, I do not know ; nor do I know that the disciples heard what was said—but they saw such glory, as astonished and overwhelmed them.

And, now, as these disciples had seen Jesus in his glory, he took them with him, to behold his sorrow. And such sorrow, my children, was never before known, and never will be ; no one can describe it, and no one can conceive of it, as it was. I will tell you however, about it, as well as I can, taking the account given us by the Evangelists, as my guide.

Christ exceedingly sorrowful.

I said Jesus took Peter, James and John with him. They proceeded a short distance from the other disciples; when, upon a sudden, Jesus began to be exceeding sorrowful, so much so, that he told them, he was almost ready to die. What a sudden change there was in his appearance! At the supper table, and until he came into the garden, how calm! how fortified! When comforting his disciples, he had forgot himself, he felt so much for them; but, now, how pressed down—in what an agony he appears. “My soul,” said he, “is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.”

He requested them to wait where they were, and to keep watch, while he should go a short distance, and pour out his soul in prayer. Having proceeded about a stone’s throw, he kneeled down and began to pray—soon after, in the depth of his sorrow, he fell upon his face, and begged of God, his Father, that if it was consistent, he might be spared the approaching hour of agony and the pains of crucifixion.

Prays for deliverance.

Resignation.

It is right, if possible, and consistent, to avoid suffering; and it was right in Jesus to wish to be saved from the sorrow, pain, and suffering, which were coming upon him. He wished it, if mankind could be saved without it. But, still, he was humble, and resigned. He was desirous that God should do just as he pleased: "Not my will," said he, "but thine be done."

Such was his prayer—such his resignation. He knew that whatever God decided was right, and for the best. And not for a single moment, did he wish it otherwise. Were it consistent, he could wish that the cup of suffering before him might pass away; yet he could drink it to its lowest dregs. He would shun no trial—avoid no suffering. His love of souls would carry him through. He might, indeed, die in the conflict—he might suffer as no mortal suffered—as no other man *could* suffer—that he expected. For all this he was prepared, if it were God's will.

Disciples asleep.

Such was his prayer—such his perfect resignation.

He now returned to his disciples—to the three whom he had selected to accompany him, and watch with him. But what a marvellous sight did he see!—these disciples were asleep! Who could have believed it? What! sleep, when their Master was so pressed with sorrow!—sleep! with such a scene before them! Our Saviour at first expressed apparent surprise himself. “What!” said he to Peter, “could ye not watch with me one hour?”

But our Saviour understood full well the real fact. And his love and tenderness made for them a full apology. “The spirit,” said he, “is willing, but the flesh is weak.” Their sleep was no evidence of their indifference—it betrayed no want of affection for Christ. Look at it. It was now sometime past midnight. Their feelings had been greatly excited. For hours, the sorrows of their souls had been in exercise, in view of some strange and unwel-

Necessary that Christ should suffer.

come event, which they foresaw was to come to pass. Their strength was exhausted, they sunk down, therefore, under their grief and weariness; and, in this state, Jesus found them on his return.

Again he left them, and again sought relief in prayer. He prayed with still more earnestness, that the cup of sorrow might pass from him. This he repeated a third time. But it was not the will of God. It was necessary that he should suffer, or mankind could not be saved. Much as his Father loved him—willing as he was to exempt his only begotten and well-beloved Son from a scene so truly awful—that might not be. On the contrary, sorrow now came over him like the waves of the sea. The Father himself seems to have forsaken him. It was the hour of Satan's assault. With the Prince of darkness, in some *mysterious* manner, he had now a conflict, in which his sufferings were so awful and extreme, that the blood started through the

Agony.

pores of his body. Mingling with the sweat, it fell in great drops to the ground. Oh! what agony was that! What sorrow was ever like unto this sorrow! Under the pressure of it, he was nearly ready to yield. It was beyond the power of nature to endure. At this awful crisis, an angel from above was sent to his relief. In what way that angel strengthened him, I cannot say. Probably he told him, that the hour of conflict was almost past—a little longer—only a little longer, and the agony would be over—the cloud upon his soul would roll away—the Father would again smile; and, though he would go, and must go, to the cross, the victory would, in fact, have been achieved;—the empire of darkness would have received a blow, which it would never recover, and joy would begin, which should never end.

But you will ask, perhaps, still more particularly what threw Jesus into such an agony? Was he afraid of death? Did he tremble to

Why did he suffer such agony ?

die on the cross. Oh! no, this was not the cause of his deep distress. Thousands have died on the cross—have been racked by the torture—have weltered in flames, and yet have shown no fear, and no misgiving. No, it was not fear, which brought forth drops of blood upon the body of Jesus, but it was agony, and that agony was doubtless *connected with his atoning for sin*. Many good men have given it as their opinion, that the sufferings of Christ in the garden were as great, if not greater, than those he endured on the cross. This is probably correct. He seems to have been forsaken of the Father. He had probably now an awful sense of the wrath of God against sin. He travailed alone, as it were, under the pressure of a world of guilt. Satan, too, might have presented images of horror and despair, and might have infused doubts, whether he would be able to accomplish the work, which he had undertaken.

I do not know that I have assigned the true

Judas makes his appearance.

cause of these awful sufferings of Jesus in the garden. But there *was* a cause, and one which filled him with agony, amazement, and horror. But, at length, the hour passed by; and again he appeared as calm and fortified, as usual.* He returned to his disciples, whom he again found sleeping; but whom he awoke, and to whom he announced the distressing tidings, that his betrayer was at hand.

It was even so. And, yet, could it be so?—a friend become a traitor? All this was true. At this instant, a band of men and officers presented themselves before Jesus and his disciples. At their head was Judas himself. A mixed multitude accompanied them. They were armed with swords and clubs. They carried lanterns and torches. It was, indeed, the time of the full moon, (for at the time of the full moon only, was the Passover celebrated)—but it was probably *cloudy*, and the garden was so full of shade trees, as to render lights necessary to distinguish objects, with

Hail Master!

certainty. But what an aspect did these torches give to the excited mob! How savage and murderous did they look!

As they came within sight of Jesus, they stopped. He now advanced, and inquired, whom they sought. They answered "Jesus of Nazareth." He replied, "I am he." While saying this, a divine dignity sat upon his countenance, and, for a moment, a ray of his original glory might have darted upon them. The multitude were awe struck, and in their haste to retreat from before the majesty and dignity, which, for the moment he assumed, they fell to the ground.

But it was not thus with Judas, his faithless disciple. Bent on his purpose, he now approached Jesus, and kissing him said, "Hail Master!"

How could Jesus suffer him to do it. He knew his object; he knew his heart. He knew that he had told the band of officers and men, that he would betray him to them, by

Why art thou come?

saluting him as a "friend." With this knowledge, how could Jesus submit to such indignity, and hold his peace, in view of such treachery? He had power—all power—he had brought back the lifeless body from the grave, and summoned the departed spirit from the invisible world—he had said to the tempest, and to the raging billows of the ocean, "Peace, be still." The same power was his now. In a single moment, had he put forth that power, his enemies would have withered before him, as flax would have been consumed, in the furnace of Nebuchadnezzar. But that power was not exerted—no, nor did an unholy indignation, for a moment, rise in his breast. He treated the apostate Judas with tenderness, and even, at that moment, appeared to wish that he might solemnly think, what he was about. "Friend," said he, "wherefore art thou come?" You profess friendship for me—what are you about?—think, Judas what you are doing!

Christ seized.

The multitude again gathered courage. At the time they went back, and fell to the ground, quite probably they feared that the power of Jesus, which they must have known he possessed, would be manifested in some signal way, against them. And how well it might have been! How *could* Jesus restrain himself. But he did: and, emboldened by his meek and submissive appearance, they pressed forward, and took him.

Thus, at last, was the Son of God a prisoner, in the hands of men. Thus, he was seized, as a violater of the laws, and an enemy of his country; whereas, he was the great friend of the world. What must angels have thought, if they were witnesses of this scene! What must have been the power of Jesus over himself! What forbearance! What self control! And more than this, what must have been his benevolence and love, which could carry him so meekly and yet so triumphantly, through such insult and abuse!

Wished no defence.

His disciples were good men—they were actuated by the pure principles of their Master—but those principles exerted not such a degree of influence over them, as they did over him. They felt indignant. They were anxious to rescue their Master, and, in his attachment, and under the excitement of his feelings, *Peter* drew a sword, and striking a servant of the High Priest, smote off his ear. This was doubtless a rash act. Jesus told him to sheathe his sword, and attempt no defence. Had he needed power, his Father would have imparted it—had his deliverance been expedient, twelve legions of angels, or more than seventy thousand, would in a moment, have clustered round him, and shielded him from his foes.

But it was not best. No; for, then, the Scripture could not have been fulfilled, “That thus it must be.” Jesus knew this, and he wished it not. Sin could not have been pardoned. The curse could not have been removed. The gates of Heaven would have

Asked no deliverance.

remained barred forever, and not a single rebel would have been ransomed, by redeeming blood.

All this Jesus well knew, and therefore "for the joy set before him," he asked no deliverance. No, he had already drunk the bitterest cup of sorrow. He had waded through billows, which would rise no higher. In one conflict with the powers of darkness, he had already triumphed. What remained, he could surmount. He therefore bid his disciples be quiet, and suffer the purposes of infinite love and mercy to meet their accomplishment.

When you are older, children, you will better comprehend this subject. You will cease to wonder, why Christians rejoice so much in the sufferings of the Son of God. But let me tell you, it will take a whole eternity to understand the "height and depth, the length and breadth" of the patience and love of Jesus.

And I am sure, if you ever reach Heaven,

Children should praise Jesus now.

and see Jesus, and think, as you will think, what he endured for you, you will sing the sweetest song you are able ; you will wish to sing still sweeter ; and you will pay him all the honor you can ; and, after all, you will think it not half enough. But why not begin this song *now* ? Why not lay your honors at his feet, young as you are. Jesus will accept your praise, and accept your homage. Begin then now.

I would begin the music here ;
And so my soul should rise :
Oh, for some heavenly notes, to bear
My passions to the skies !

There ye, that love my Saviour, sit ;
There I would fain have place,
Among your thrones, or at your feet,
So I might see his face.

LECTURE III.

THE TRIAL OF JESUS CHRIST.

CONTENTS.—Flight of the disciples. Caiaphas. Sanhedrim. Jesus arraigned before the council. Attempt to make Jesus convict himself. Trial. Condemnation. Design of bringing him before a Roman tribunal. Insults previously offered to him. His patience and humility. Brought before Pilate. Sent by Pilate to Herod. Return to Pilate, who attempts to release him. Dream of Pilate's wife. Clamor of the Jews. Decision of Pilate. Jesus scourged.

JESUS was now in the power of his enemies. He was in their power, and without a friend at hand, in whom he could confide. But how so? Where were his *disciples*?

Ah, that indeed! Only a few hours before, how courageous they were! How full of affection! They would never forsake him—certainly never *deny* him. And they did love him, and they were sincere in all that they said, and they verily believed, that they were prepared for any trial, which might come upon

Disciples flee.

Jesus bound.

them. But they did not know themselves. They knew not the weakness of poor human nature. The very first appearance of danger alarmed them, and they fled. Not even the intrepid Peter had the courage to abide with his Master. It is easy to have courage, when there is no danger; but the true test of courage is to meet it, when it comes.

Having taken Jesus, as I said, the officers bound him. They wished to make sure of him. But bonds were needless. He had no design to escape. Submissive to the will of his Father, who, for wise purposes had delivered him into their hands, he went "as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep is dumb before her shearers, so he opened not his mouth."

At first, they led him to the house of Annas. He was an old man, and had been a long time, in former years, High Priest. This was an office of great honor. It belonged to the High Priest, among other duties, to preside

Jesus before the Council.

over the worship of the temple, and the great council, called the Sanhedrim. Annas had had five sons, who had enjoyed this office, and Caiaphas, who was that year High Priest, was his son-in-law. In conducting Jesus to Annas first, they doubtless intended to pay him respect; and, at the same time, secure his influence.

Next, they led him to the palace of Caiaphas himself, where the great council of the nation had been called together, to determine what should be done with Jesus, should he be taken. This council was called the *Sanhedrim*. It was composed of seventy-two members, who consisted of *Chief Priests*, *Elders*, and *Scribes*. The High Priest was President of this council. The Chief Priests were those, who had been High Priests. The Elders were the Princes of the twelve tribes. The Scribes were the learned men of the nation.

Before this council, Jesus was brought. They held their meeting in the *Hall*, in the

Trial begun.

centre of the palace. Here, they entered upon his trial—but it was without order, and against common justice. False witnesses were brought forward, who were *bribed* to testify to things, which they pretended Jesus had said and done contrary to the laws of the nation and blasphemous against God. But the witnesses did not agree. It was hence manifest, that they did not speak the truth; and that their only object was to condemn him. Their accusations amounted to nothing.

This was as plain to themselves, as it was to Jesus. And well did he know, that they had scarcely a show of reason to condemn him. For a time, he said nothing. He did not even attempt to show them how fully he saw through their wickedness, and artifice.

At length, the High Priest attempted to make Jesus convict himself. This he did, by saying to him, “I adjure thee, by the living God, that thou tell us, whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God.” What a question! Jesus

Trial continued.

himself was on his trial, and here he is put under oath to testify *against himself*. "I adjure thee, by the living God," was the usual form of putting an oath among the Jews. They had no right to put this question. If Jesus should answer that he was the Son of God, they stood ready to condemn him, for *blasphemy*. If he denied it, they would condemn him as an *impostor*. Jesus well understood their object, and he might justly have declined answering the question. But, as he was innocent, he had nothing himself to fear. And he had no secrets, which he wished to conceal. He replied, therefore, that in respect to his doctrines, he had openly taught them to the world. The people have heard me. They know what I have said. Why ask *me* then? Why attempt to make a prisoner condemn himself? Go to the people, who heard me; bring them forward and let them testify; "behold they know what I have said."

At the moment of concluding these words

Jesus insulted.

an officer, who stood near, struck Jesus with the palm of his hand. He pretended that the answer of Christ was disrespectful to the High Priest. But it was not so intended, nor had it the least appearance of disrespect. The blow given Jesus was therefore a gross violation of the rights of Jesus, as a prisoner, under trial. He ought to have been under the protection of the court, and had a right to demand, that every measure taken against him should be strictly legal. To the officer, who struck him, he turned, and said: "In my answer to the High Priest, if I spoke evil—if I said any thing improper, let it be *proved* and punish me according *to law*; but if I said nothing improper, why do you smite me?" Jesus was willing to be reviled and persecuted—he could bear insult and abuse, with perfect meekness; and it was not because he indulged any unholy, or unkind feelings towards his persecutors, that he demanded justice; but only that he might show them

Confession of Jesus.

how contrary to all justice and propriety, they were conducting his trial.

“I adjure thee, by the living God,” said Caiaphas to Jesus—I put you upon your oath : “Are you the Son of God?” If I tell you said Jesus, you would not let me go. Your object is to condemn me. But, nevertheless, I will answer the question. “Thou hast said,”—you have spoken the truth. I am the Son of God. And, hereafter, you will see the proof of it. You shall see the Son of man on the right hand of power. He will occupy the throne of God ; and you shall see him coming in the clouds of Heaven. By this last declaration, Jesus intended to convey to the council, what he had before intimated to his disciples, that he would come to destroy their city, and in the end to judge the world.

This confession of Christ was enough. It was just what his enemies wanted. The High Priest immediately rent his clothes. This, among the Jews, was commonly a to-

Condemned.

ken of grief. It is not meant that he tore the robes of his priestly office, for this was forbidden, (Lev. x. 6 ; xxi. 10.) But he tore some part of his ordinary garment. He affected to feel great grief. He pronounced the declaration of Jesus *blasphemy*, and decided that further evidence was unnecessary. They would not admit, that he was the Son of God, but an impostor.

Now turning to the council, he put the question, "What think ye?" This was the usual form of asking their opinion, whether a criminal deserved death or not.

They unanimously replied, "He is guilty of death." Thus the Son of God, with scarcely the form of a trial—with no other evidence, than his own innocent and true declaration, was adjudged worthy of death.

But, by what *law* did the council condemn him? By a law, which you will find in Lev. xxiv. 16. "He that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, he shall surely be put to death, and

all the congregation shall certainly stone him.” Under pretence of having broken this law, Jesus was condemned. But by this law, he should have been *stoned* to death, had he been guilty.

But they were afraid to stone him. Should he be put to death in this manner, all the *congregation*, the people, must be assembled. This would not answer their purpose. Many of the people admitted the claims of Jesus. They would not stone him, nor suffer others to do it. It would produce tumult and confusion, and the purpose of the rulers would be defeated.

But there was another expedient. They might, perhaps, bring him before a *Roman tribunal*, for some civil offence; and could they procure his condemnation there, few only would know it. Popular excitement would be prevented, and still their purpose, viz: his death, would be accomplished.

Previously, however, to bringing him before

Insulted.

Patience and humility.

a Roman tribunal, as they now agreed, they wished to show him all the indignity in their power. Hence, no sooner was he condemned by the council, than some began to *spit* in his face; some *buffeted* him; that is struck him with their fists; and others *smote* him with the palms of their hands. Mark says, that they blindfolded him, and then said unto him, "Prophecy unto us, or reveal, thou Christ, who it is that smote thee."

But Jesus answered them not. He made no resistance. The "captain of salvation" was to be made "perfect through suffering." He submitted, therefore, to the cruelties and insults of his enemies, without a murmur. Oh! how patient he was. What an example of endurance did he set us! Let us imitate him, who, when he was reviled, reviled not again but submitted himself to the will of God, in full confidence that he would enable him to endure unto the end. And God will enable us to follow that example, in the hour

We should be like Jesus.

of temptation and insult, if we put our trust in him. It is easy to be kind to friends—but to love enemies—to pray for them sincerely—to do them good from the heart, this is an important lesson, which we should endeavor to learn. Jesus did all this, with a perfect heart. There was no offence, which he could not forgive—no insult, which he could not overlook. He had enjoined it upon his disciples, “Love your enemies,” and he himself set the example. And even when expiring on the cross, as we shall soon see, he could direct his prayer to Heaven for his enemies: “Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.” In this, the character of Jesus shone forth with surpassing glory. We shall never attain to that fulness of moral excellency, which he possessed—we may never be able to do *as* he did, but we may do *like* him; and if we ever reach that world where he dwells, we *shall* be like him; for we shall then see him as he is.

When the morning came, the Chief Priests and Elders consulted what they should do, to procure the death of Christ. The council had condemned him to death for blasphemy ; but they feared, as I said, to carry this sentence into execution. It was proposed, therefore, to accuse him before the Roman governor. But of what crime should they accuse him? Of blasphemy? This was no breach of any Roman law. This would not do. It was agreed, therefore, to accuse him of a design to dethrone Tiberius Cæsar, who was at that time emperor of Rome, and to assume the government himself.

With this design, they now conducted Jesus to Pontius Pilate, the governor of Judea. When they had reached the Judgment hall, a place in the governor's palace, where justice was administered, and *injustice often done*, they began to accuse him, saying, " We found this fellow perverting or destroying the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, saying,

Jesus before Herod.

that he himself is Christ, a king.” This accusation, they probably thought would be enough, and they hoped that Pilate would condemn him, without a trial. When Pilate heard that he was a Galilean, he sent him to Herod, who reigned over Galilee, a province which lay to the north of Judea, beyond Samaria. Herod happened at this time to be in Jerusalem. He was exceedingly glad of an opportunity to see Jesus, having heard many wonderful accounts about him, and hoping to see a miracle wrought by him. Before Herod, the Jews began to accuse him, and Herod asked him many questions; but Jesus answered none of them. He knew that Herod had no right to judge in the case. This probably exasperated Herod, who, with his guard of soldiers, now attempted to mock and ridicule him. For this purpose, they put on him a gorgeous robe, probably some old robe, which Herod had formerly worn, and which was designed to pour contempt upon his pretending to be a

Pilate and Herod become friends.

king. Thus arrayed, Herod sent him back to Pilate, to dispose of him as he pleased.

Here we may notice a singular circumstance. On that day, and from that occasion, Herod and Pilate, who had been bitter enemies, became warm friends. The cause of their enmity, I do not know ; but Herod was pleased, that Pilate sent Jesus to him; and both, now forgetting their former hatred of each other, united in ridiculing and persecuting the Son of God.

Jesus having been brought back to the Judgment hall, Pilate told his accusers to take him, and try him according to their own law. They replied, that they had done so ; and as a malefactor, he was worthy of death. But they wished the governor's sanction of what they had done.

Upon this, Pilate took Jesus aside, and put the question to him, " Are you the king of the Jews ?" Jesus replied, " My kingdom is not of this world. The kingdoms of this world

I am a king.

are defended by arms. If my kingdom was of this world, my supporters would have fought for me. I should, with their assistance, have defended myself. I should not have suffered myself to have been taken by the Jews. But my kingdom bears no likeness to the kingdoms of the present world."

"Are you a king then?" Pilate again inquired.

"I will not hesitate to answer the inquiry," said Jesus. "I am a king. To this end I was born, that I might present truth to men, and exercise dominion over the hearts of men." By this he meant to assure Pilate, that he had no designs against the Roman government. He was no usurper. He was no earthly general. He collected no armies—led forth none to battle and conquest. But he was a preacher of truth. He was a king over a spiritual kingdom.

This explanation satisfied Pilate. He was convinced that the charge of the Jews was

I find no fault in him.

groundless. Jesus made no pretensions to worldly power. Rome and its emperor had nothing to fear. He looked upon Jesus as a poor deluded man, and evidently regarded him with contempt.

Pilate now went out unto the Jews, who all this time had not themselves entered into the Judgment hall, for as they were about to eat the Passover, they thought they should be polluted by entering into a heathen court of justice,—Pilate, I say, went out to them, and told them plainly, “That he could find no fault at all in him.” He saw no evidence to support their charge. He believed him to be an innocent man. And not only innocent, but too uninfluential to endanger the state. He was willing therefore to release him. And besides, he knew that the opposition of the Chief Priests arose from envy. They were afraid of his popularity. They were afraid that the people would love and respect him, more than they did them. Knowing this, Pilate ought

Message of Pilate's wife.

to have released him, notwithstanding their opposition.

While Pilate was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent a remarkable message to him. Whether she was secretly an admirer of Christ, I cannot say—she might possibly have believed in him, as the true Messiah. At least, she believed him innocent; and she felt a strong desire, that her husband should have no concern in the case. Such had been her anxiety, knowing what was intended against Jesus, that she had been troubled in a dream, on account of it. Probably she feared the judgments of God upon her family, if Jesus should be condemned. She therefore sent an urgent request, that Pilate would release him.

It must here be mentioned, that it was a custom, whenever the yearly Passover was celebrated among the Jews, for the Roman governor to release unto them some Jew, who was held prisoner for a crime. The origin of this custom is unknown; but so the cus-

Barabbas.Crucify him.

tom was, and the people had a right to ask the release of *any person* whom they pleased. At this time, there was a distinguished prisoner, by the name of *Barabbas*. He was distinguished for having made a disturbance in the city, during which, he had committed murder. Some suppose that he was by profession a robber.

During the trial of Jesus, Pilate, hoping that the Jews would prefer the release of Jesus to the vile and abandoned Barabbas, inquired of them, which of the two, according to custom, he should release.

Left to themselves, the multitude, who had a right to choose, would, perhaps, have preferred Jesus; but, instigated by the Chief Priests and Elders they clamorously demanded the release of Barabbas. "What, then," asked Pilate, "shall I do with Jesus?" They cried out, "Crucify him, crucify him." Pilate was still unwilling. He was more and more convinced, that Jesus was an innocent,

Pilate yields.

and injured man. He inquired, therefore, "Why, what evil hath he done?" This he repeated three several times. And, again, he assured them, that he could find no sufficient cause of death in him. "I will, therefore, chastise him and let him go."

But, now, the voices of the multitude were loud and clamorous. They demanded in tones of authority, that Jesus should be crucified. Ah! had Pilate been the man of decision, which he ought to have been—had he had the firmness to follow the convictions of his conscience, such injustice would not have taken place—Jesus would have been spared, and Barabbas would have met his merited fate.

But Pilate was a lover of popularity. Like an ambitious man, he was ready to sacrifice his principles to the maintainance of his worldly honor. He yielded, when he should have been firm; he sacrificed the innocent, when he should have punished the guilty.

Having, at length, yielded the point, Pilate

His blood be on us.

took water, and washed his hands, in the presence of the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person." Was he innocent? And could water wash away thy guilt, Pilate? Couldst thou thus free thyself from crime? No.

No bleeding bird, nor bleeding beast,
Nor hyssop branch, nor sprinkling priest,
Nor running brook, nor flood, nor sea,
Could wash thy dismal stain away.

"*I am innocent,*" said Pilate; "see ye to it." Then shouted the multitude, "His blood be on us, and on our children." What a fearful imprecation! Let the guilt of his death be upon us, and upon our children. We will bear the punishment of it. What a load did they take upon themselves! And, at length, that load came. In less than forty years, the signal judgments of God came upon them for rejecting the Son of God. A Roman army, under the emperor Vespasian, and his son

Jerusalem a heap of ruins.

Titus, besieged their city. The flames kindled upon their dwellings—their palaces fell to ashes, and their idolized temple smouldered in ruins. Famine slew its thousands; pestilence rioted through their streets. More than a million of inhabitants perished, and their blood ran in currents, like water. Thousands were crucified, in the same manner, in which they had crucified the Lord of life and glory. So great was the number of those that suffered, in this manner, that Josephus says, “they were, at length, obliged to cease from it, room being wanting for the crosses, and crosses for the men.” And since Jerusalem was made a heap of ruins, what judgments have followed this people, accursed of God. They have been separated and divided, among the nations. They have drank of the cup of affliction, in every form; they are still drinking it; they are a hissing and a by-word among men. One day, their state may be changed—one day, but when that day will

Barabbas released.Jesus condemned.

come, I cannot tell—they may exclaim in the streets of Jerusalem, in those very streets, where they once cried, “Away with him, away with him, crucify him, crucify him,” they may exclaim with admiration and joy, “Hosanna, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.”

Their glad Hosannas, Prince of Peace,
Thy welcome shall proclaim ;
And heaven’s eternal arches ring
With thy beloved name.

The decision of Pilate was now made. Barabbas was released, and Jesus condemned. He was condemned, while perfectly innocent ; for in every action of his life, in every thought, and wish of his heart, he was “holy and harmless.” He claimed no honors, which were not his due ;—he was entitled to the homage of the world ; yet he relinquished them. He coveted them not. Nor did he seek to interfere with the rights of temporal princes. He wished not for their power, nor

Jesus scourged.

their wealth, nor their praises. But he might ask justice—but justice and humanity were both denied him.

Pilate, as I said, having decided that Jesus should be crucified, proceeded to *scourge* him. This was a custom with the Romans, in respect to *slaves*, before they were bound to the cross ; and, as Jesus was about to suffer as a slave, he was treated like one. By the law of Moses, the number of stripes inflicted could not exceed forty ; but the Romans inflicted what number they pleased. The scourging of Jesus was so *severe*, that, in connection with his fasting and fatigue, he was unable to bear his cross.

This was in some respects the most unjustifiable part of Pilate's conduct. He had declared him innocent ; wherefore, then, should he treat him as a malefactor ? Pilate had no intention to fulfil the purposes of God ; but he *was* fulfilling them, and was *undesignedly* helping forward the redemption of the world. That was to him a sad and guilty hour, in

A dark, and yet bright day.

which he gave sentence against the blameless Son of God. Well might he have wished, that he had never seen that day, in which he raised the scourge against the Prince of Peace. That was a dark day, in respect to him, and those who urged him forward to those acts of insult and cruelty. Yet, it was a bright and glorious day for a ruined world. That day was to bring the Son of God to the cross, and to give a momentary triumph to the powers of darkness. But death to Jesus, would be death to those powers, and light and life to a ruined race. It would be their spiritual birth-day—the dawning of immortality—the opening of a fountain, which would wash away guilt, and which would never cease to flow—the commencement of a song, whose notes would swell louder, and sound sweeter, while eternity should last.

Sad and mournful, then surely as were the scenes, which were then acting, those who were “waiting for the consolation of Israel,”

Pre pare the Lord his way.

—those who were earnestly looking and longing for the coming of the true Messiah—all such, on the morning of that day might have sung, while in grief they poured forth their tears :

Let heaven proclaim this joyful day,
Joy through the earth be seen ;
Let cities shine in bright array,
And fields in cheerful green.

Let an unusual joy surprise
The islands of the sea ,
Ye mountains, sink ; ye vallies, rise ;
Prepare the Lord his way.

Behold, he comes ! he comes to bless
The nations as their God ;
This day, he dies upon the cross,
And sends his love abroad.

LECTURE IV.

END OF JUDAS, AND DENIAL OF PETER.

CONTENTS.—The whole life of Jesus a life of sorrow. Treachery of Judas. Reason of it. His sense of guilt. Confession of the innocence of Jesus. Commits suicide. Flight of the disciples. Character of Peter. His conduct in the hall of the palace—in the porch—on his return into the hall. His denial. Bitterness of his repentance. Difference between good and bad men. Observations.

EVERY step of the progress of Jesus to the cross, my children, was full of sorrow and trial. By his enemies he was abused, persecuted, and finally murdered. This was conduct, on their part, exceedingly heinous and cruel; yet it was not unexpected. He came into the world to die for sinners. He came “to seek, and to save that which was lost.” He knew full well that he should be despised and rejected of men. He foresaw, in every particular, how the Jews would treat him, and that they would, at length, crucify him. Yet, in all that they

Affecting incidents.

did, they acted freely. They needed not have injured a hair of his head. But they had wicked hearts, and those hearts led them to treat him as they did.

And had his trials come only from his open enemies, how differently would he have felt! But his friends—ah! from his friends—his bosom friends—his own family, some of his sorest earthly trials arose. By one disciple he was betrayed into the hands of his enemies; and by another, before those enemies, and even in his own presence, he was openly denied.

About these solemn and affecting incidents, I must tell you, before we proceed to that scene, which closed the eventful life of the Son of God. I do not tell about these, because it imparts any pleasure to contemplate them. Oh! no, my children, they are sad and painful incidents, in the life of this exalted and blessed man; but still they may convey useful lessons. You will learn what poor hu-

Why Judas betrayed Jesus.

man nature is—what little dependence is to be placed upon human friendships—and how often our best resolutions are, in the hour of temptation, broken.

I have already told you in part of the treachery of Judas, and that that treachery ended in the betraying of his Lord and Master, into the hands of his enemies. But that treachery had also an awful issue in respect to Judas himself. I will tell you how it was.

Judas betrayed Jesus, through his excessive love of money. He was an exceedingly avaricious man. Yet, it is not probable, that he expected, that his conduct would result, as it did. He might hope that Jesus would escape. Probably he did. He knew that Christ possessed the power of working miracles; and he might suppose that he would work a miracle to deliver himself.

But when he saw him taken, bound, tried, and condemned—when he saw that that condemnation was likely to issue in his death,

Confession of Judas.

the baseness of his conduct overwhelmed him. The guilt of deliberate murder lay at his door ; and the sense of that guilt filled his soul with the deepest remorse. He felt shocked, and horror struck, as he dwelt upon the crime.

And well he might. He had lifted his hand against a friend. He had sundered the ties of confidence,—nay, far more than this, he had betrayed “innocent blood.” He knew that Jesus was an innocent man. He had been with him for years—had seen him in public and in private—he knew all about his conduct and conversation, and had there been any thing secretly vile, or unworthy in Christ, he would have known it. Yet he confessed—openly confessed, not that he *believed* him innocent, but that he *knew* him to be innocent. He had no doubts, and no suspicions. His innocence was a fact, to which he could attest.

This confession of Judas deserves to be noted and remembered. He was a bad man ;

Jesus proved to be innocent.

but his testimony is entitled to credit. It was in favor of the *victim* of his treachery, and against *himself*. Could it have been otherwise—could he even have suspected that Jesus was a bad man, he would have done it. Children, mark it, and remember it, the vilest man that ever lived confessed and published abroad, that he *knew* that Jesus was innocent.

And I will tell you how he *proved* the truth of what he said. He brought again the thirty pieces of silver, and returned them to the Chief Priests. He could not keep this money. It was the price of innocent blood. Its very appearance shocked him. Every time he saw it, it proclaimed his guilt. He had no peace till he had restored it.

Had he peace then? No, there was no peace for him. But did he not repent, and may not one who repents be at peace? Judas did, indeed, repent; but it was not the *repentance*, which leads to a *better life*. He was sorry for what he had done. So may a

True repentance.

murderer be sorry, as he goes to the gallows—sorry that he committed a crime, for which he must be *hanged*; but release him, and he might murder again. *True repentance leads to reformation.* A child may be sorry that he hurt his brother, because his father chastises him for it—he is sorry that he has to *suffer pain*, and so he is sorry for the act, because he is *punished* for it. But he *would not* be sorry, if he might escape the correction. That is, he is not sorry for the act itself, for the wrong done, because it is *sinful*, but because he must be punished for it. This is not sincere repentance.

This was precisely the case with Judas. He suffered awful distress of mind—he was punished in his own inward torments of soul—and he probably wished that he had not so done—and he wished so because he was miserable on account of it—but he had no *sorrowful* sense of guilt—no deep regret for the wicked act, because it was wicked.

Judas hangs himself.

“But how do you know this, sir?” perhaps you inquire. How do I know this? It is plain, quite plain; and I will show it to you. If a child has done wrong, and sincerely repents, will he the next moment do so again? Will he do even worse? No; by no means.

And how did Judas act? He said, “I have sinned,” and it is said of him, that he “repented himself,” and that he restored the money, and plainly told the Chief Priests, that Jesus was innocent. All this was well. But what did he then do? He added another black crime to the one he had just committed he hurried away from the presence of men—he went out amid the darkness of the night and hung himself!

Did this look like true repentance? No, it was only adding one crime to another—it was plunging deeper, and still deeper in guilt.

I will add only a few words as to the manner, in which Judas attempted to take his own life. Matthew says that he hanged him-

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Awful circumstances attending his death.

self. Yet, Peter, in giving an account of the death of Christ, (Acts i. 18,) says, that Judas “falling headlong, burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out.” These two accounts have by some been supposed to be at variance. But it is easily shown, that there is no contradiction. Matthew says that he hung himself. No doubt he did—but the rope proved insufficient to sustain his weight. He therefore fell headlong upon his face, and at such a distance that his bowels came out, and his death, was by reason of this, most horrid.

The conduct of *another* of his disciples must have greatly added to the already poignant sorrow of the Son of God. One and all of them, indeed, acted a timid and unworthy part. They left him in the hour of peril, and fled. They did this, notwithstanding their pledge to abide with him, and lay down their lives for his sake.

Why was this? How came it to pass? We are not told, but it is easy to conjecture.

Denial of Peter.

They were suddenly, and exceedingly alarmed. The ferocious aspect of the band, which accompanied Judas, terrified them. They saw Jesus himself indeed calm, but surrendering himself into the power of his enemies, without resistance. Resistance he forbid. Why should he do this? Had his power forsaken him? Could he no longer work a miracle for their salvation. For the moment, their *faith wavered*—suspicion cast a doubt, perhaps, over their minds, whether he was the true Messiah, and if not—if not, what could they expect, but death itself?—and they fled.

But there was one disciple, who to weakness and unbelief, added the sin of *open denial*. That disciple was *Peter*.

The character of Peter deserves a passing notice. His attachment to Christ was ardent and sincere. Christ loved and honored him, in return. He was one of the three, who saw the glory of the Son of God, on the mount of transfiguration. He was one of the same

Character of Peter.

three, whom Christ selected to witness his agony in the garden of Gethsemane, and to comfort him in that most awful hour of horror and distress.

Peter was evidently by nature a *bold, ardent*, and even *rash* man. Such a man is likely to be generous, kind-hearted, and sincere ; yet liable to be overcome by sudden temptation. It was exactly so with Peter. When he told Christ, he would die for him, rather than deny him, he thought so, and felt so. He felt, as I told you, at that time, strong and had no more design of denying his Lord and Master, than had the other disciples. At that moment, his resolution might have been even stronger than theirs. But he fell—grievously fell. Let us trace the circumstances.

Jesus, as I told you, having been seized, was conducted to the palace of Caiaphas, the High Priest. Peter followed. So far he showed a sincere attachment to his Master. But he followed at a *distance*—"afar off." He was afraid, and desirous to avoid danger.

What is duty ?

And was this wrong? On all proper occasions, it is right to avoid danger. We should not expose life, unnecessarily. But there are times, when duty bids us go forward, and trust ourselves to the disposal of Providence. Our question should be what is *duty*? and having decided that, we should shun no difficulty, and fear no danger. God can deliver us, if that be his pleasure; or, if we fall, he can take us to his glory. Paul thought so, and so thought the thousand and ten thousand martyrs, who in after times, laid down their lives for the cause of Christ. Peter should have thought thus, and thus should he have acted.

After some time, proceeding with great caution, he reached the palace. Another disciple was with him. That disciple was probably *John*. Peter lingered without. John had more courage, and went in. He was acquainted with Caiaphas, the High Priest; and, on this account, had less fear. Soon after, John went out, and brought in Peter.

You are his disciple.

The latter now mingled with the servants, or attendants, who were surrounding a fire of coals, for the purpose of warming themselves. The night was cool. It was probably not far from midnight.

While standing here in the hall, which was a place less elevated than the tribunal, where the council were trying Jesus, but in plain sight of him, a damsel approached him, and apparently by accident, as it would seem, observed to him “Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee?” That is, you are one of his disciples? The damsel had probably no evil design in the question, but it filled Peter with terror, and he denied, and denied before them all, that he was a disciple—he denied that he knew Jesus; he denied that he even understood what was meant. Ah! where was his courage? Where his love to Jesus? Where his regard to truth? All fled? Could this be *Peter*? Could it be he, who had once ventured upon the raging waters to meet Jesus?

Peter in the porch.

Could it be he, who had said—solemnly said, that he would *die* with his Master, rather than deny him? Yes, and said this, only a few hours before. But it was even so. What he said was palpable falsehood, and he knew it to be so.

Upon this, he left the hall, and went out into the *porch*, or entrance-way. This was a small apartment, between the outer door, and the large hall, which was in the centre of the building. The question of the damsel had distressed him, and to avoid observation, he retired to the porch. As he entered that, Mark says, the cock crew. This was not long after midnight, and in the early part of the trial of Jesus. Whether Peter heard the crowing of the cock, I cannot say. If he did, what must he have thought? Did he recollect the prediction of the Saviour? Perhaps not. Or, if he did, he hoped to escape further observation, and the necessity of further denial.

A solemn oath.

But even in the porch, he remained not long unobserved. Here, another damsel saw him, and began to say to some that stood by, "Here is one of his disciples." (Mark xiv. 69.) To this observation, Peter might have made no reply; or, at *the same time*, a man might have put the question, "Thou art also one of them?" (Luke xxii. 58.) And again he denied his Master, and accompanied that denial with a *solemn oath*.

About an hour afterwards, we find Peter again in the hall. The trial was still proceeding. The council was in plain view. Jesus himself was standing, where Peter could see him, and he, Peter. At this moment, a servant, a kinsman of Malchus, whose ear Peter had cut off, approached him, and asked, "Did I not see thee in the garden with him? Surely you are one of them, for you speak like a Galilean."

Peter now felt *sure* that he was known. He felt still greater alarm, and in the desperation of the moment, he began to curse and to

swear, saying, "I know not the man." No sooner had the awful curses, and the awful denial proceeded from his mouth, than the *cock crew*.

At this moment, Jesus turned his eye upon Peter—I dare say it was a look of tenderness mingled with grief—he turned his eye upon Peter, and at that moment his disciple caught the reproving glance of his Master, and he remembered his prediction : "Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice." The arrow of conviction sunk deep into his soul. A humbling sense of his guilt overwhelmed him ; he hastened forth from the palace. He mingled with the darkness of the night, and alone, and concealed, gave vent to a *flood of tears !*

My children, we must condemn Peter ; and yet, who does not pity him ? What a lamentable fall ! How could he be thus guilty ? How could he so soon forget the favors, which had been conferred upon him, and the solemn

Peter a good man.

promises which he had made. A single denial—*one* falsehood, at such a time, and under such circumstances, would have been awful guilt. What shall be said of it, when that denial was thrice, and was accompanied with cursing and swearing!

After all, my children, Peter was a *good man*—a true and sincere disciple of Christ. Do you ask how this could be? Attend, and I will endeavor to explain.

A good man *may* sin. Good men *do* sin. They sin *often*—sometimes *grievously*. How much they may sin, and yet be real Christians, I cannot tell. But, then, it is not their *plan* nor *purpose* to sin, but directly the reverse. Their wish and object is, to lead a holy life—yet they sometimes fall into sin. But one thing always distinguishes the good man, when he *has* sinned—he *repents—deeply, sincerely repents*. He confesses his sins; humbles himself, and firmly resolves to do so no more. Such a course *always* marks the good man, and no

True sorrow.

man can be good, that is a true Christian, who does not pursue this course.

Let Peter be tried by this rule. His sin was an awful one. But what did he do? Some good men repent *long* after they have sinned; but Peter went out, and wept bitterly, *as soon as he had committed the offence*. It is plain, that his heart was filled with *sorrow*. I dare say, he would willingly have died with Jesus, could he by that means have restored himself to that state, in which he was before his fall. As he was pouring out his soul, while the tears fell fast from his manly cheek, alone, and amidst the darkness of the night, how well he might have exclaimed, and doubtless, in some such manner he did exclaim :

I cannot live without thy light,
Cast out and banished from thy sight ;
Thy holy joys, my God, restore,
And guard me, that I fall no more.

Then will I teach the world thy ways ;
Sinners shall learn thy sovereign grace ;

Difference between good and bad men.

I'll lead them to my Saviour's blood,
And they shall praise a pardoning God.

And, in accordance with this, he *afterwards acted*. He became a bold and decided champion of the cross. He wavered no more. His heart was fixed; and, through life, he exerted himself to defend, and build up that cause, which he had dishonored. Thus he gave the best evidence of *sincere repentance*.

Peter, it is said, died a martyr to the faith of Jesus, by crucifixion. And when he came to be crucified, he requested that he might be crucified with his *head down*, being unworthy to end his life, as his Lord and Master had done, because he once denied him.

I must say a few words more in reference to the *difference* between good and wicked men—between the Christian, and the sinner. Both sin. This cannot be denied. But here lies a broad difference between them. It is not the *settled* purpose of the Christian to sin

—of the sinner *it is*. The Christian sins *often*—the sinner *always*. The Christian when he sins, *repents*—the sinner *does not*. The Christian resolves to do so *no more*—the sinner resolves to do so *again*, or perhaps *even worse*.

Compare Peter and Judas. Both grievously sinned. Peter wept bitterly over his crime, and showed that his repentance was sincere, by living after that a *humble, holy, and devoted* life. Judas repented, restored the thirty pieces of silver—but instead of proving his repentance to have been the genuine repentance of the gospel, he proved that it *was not*, by *committing the awful crime of suicide*. The repentance which is sincere, always leads to reformation; no other repentance is genuine; no other is acceptable to God. It is the language of the true penitent, while tears of holy sorrow bedew his cheeks :

Be this the purpose of my soul,
My solemn, my determined choice,

Never faint nor tire.

To yield to his supreme control,
And in his kind commands rejoice.

O may I never faint nor tire,
Nor wandering leave his sacred ways ;
Great God accept my soul's desire,
And give me strength to live thy praise.

LECTURE V.

CRUCIFIXION OF JESUS CHRIST.

CONTENTS.—Introductory remarks. Conduct of the soldiers towards Jesus. Place of crucifixion. Affecting Incident. Description of a cross. Manner in which Jesus was placed upon it. The malefactors. Conduct of the soldiers and the Jews. Different conduct and fate of the malefactors. Prayer of Jesus on the cross. Tenderness towards his mother. Death. Sympathy of nature with his sufferings. Observations.

DID you ever stand by the bed of a friend, in the closing moments of his life? Did you see him, as he drew his last breath? Did you hear his dying groan?

What a solemn sight? How sad and mournful you felt! But how many circumstances existed, perhaps, to soften the pillow of death, and to render the passage of your friend easy to the grave. In his own quiet chamber he died—friends clustered around

A pillow of thorns.

him—a soft hand gently administered every balm—wiped away the rising tear, and, when death came, closed the sunken eye.

My children, it was not thus, when the Son of God expired. He had no pillow, but a pillow of thorns—and not a friend—no, not one to speak a kind word, as he bowed and died. But let us attend to the story, in order. It is a mournful tale, and it will do us good ; and, when at length, we behold Jesus stretched on the cross, and groaning away his life, I hope each one will be able to say :

As I survey the wondrous cross,
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And, mourning, weep o'er all my pride.

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small ;
Love, so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

We left Jesus suffering under the scourge, by the hands of Pilate. Scourging was usually inflicted upon slaves, prior to their being crucified. This was the closing act of Pilate, who now delivered him into the hands of his enemies. Their victim was, at length, legally within their power. They no longer feared the people, since a band of soldiers was ordered by the governor to superintend, and conduct the crucifixion. Jews doubtless mingled in the scene, and showed the holy sufferer every mark of contempt and hatred, in their power.

The soldiers having received Jesus, led him into the common hall, where the whole band, consisting of from four to six hundred, were directed to assemble.

And now began a series of insults and mockery, which, had he not been more than *human*, he could not have borne. Who in similar circumstances, possessed a soul so calm, and fortified? Not a sigh escaped him ;

Purple robe.Crown of thorns.

not a murmur was uttered. Meek and humble, he stood before them. Could they resist the feelings of humanity? Could they repress pity for the man? But no such sympathy did they feel, and they indulged no pity. Jesus had declared himself to be a king; and though he was the "King of kings," they were unwilling to allow him the prerogatives of the humblest earthly monarch. To pour contempt upon him, they now stripped him of his upper garment, and clothed him with a worn out and cast off scarlet or purple robe. Next, they platted, or wove a wreath of thorns, which they put upon his head. Placing a reed in his hands, as a mock emblem of the sceptre of a king, they bowed in pretended homage to him, saying, "Hail, king of the Jews."

A writer remarks, that this was done for "sport and amusement." But what cruel sport it was! what unholy amusement! and, at length, as the climax of mockery—as the crowning act of contempt, they spit upon him; and, taking the reed, smote him on the head.

Calvary.

Sinking under a cross.

Having thus mocked, and set him at naught they led him forth to be crucified. The place selected was mount Calvary, a hill to the north-west of Jerusalem, without the walls of the city, but at a short distance. It was sometimes called Golgotha, or the place of a skull, probably from the fact, that malefactors were put to death there, and their bones sometimes remained unburied, or unburned.

It was usual for malefactors to bear their own cross. Jesus went forth bearing his; but, weakened and exhausted, he sunk under the load. But how was this? Sinking beneath the weight of *a cross*! Where now was his power? Had he not stilled the raging billows of the sea? Yes; and he had summoned back the buried body from the grave. Even creating power was his to exercise. He possessed all power: but he exerted it not. He appeared in all the weakness of our nature, and was appropriately styled "the man of sorrows, and one acquainted with

The cross.

grief." He sunk, as I said, beneath his load. At this time, the procession met a man by the name of Simon, whom they compelled to bear one end of the cross after Jesus.

"The cross was composed of two pieces of wood, one of which was placed upright in the earth, and the other across it, after the form of the letter T. The standard, or upright part, was generally so high, that the feet of the crucified person were two or three feet from the ground. On the middle of the upright part, there was a projection or *seat*, on which the person crucified sat, or as it were, *rode*. This was necessary, as the *hands* were not alone strong enough to bear the weight of the body. The arms being extended, the hands were either nailed with spikes, or tied by cords to the cross piece. The feet were fastened in a similar manner to the standard. The hands and feet of our Saviour were fastened with spikes."

The multitude, at length, reached the spot.

Vinegar and gall.

Before crucifying him, they offered him a preparation of vinegar mingled with gall ; or, as Mark calls it, wine mingled with myrrh. These were different terms for the same thing. This drink was often given to those who were about to be crucified, to render them insensible to their sufferings. Having by tasting it discovered what it was, Jesus declined it. He was unwilling to becloud his mind, or in the least to mitigate those sufferings, which were especially designed to atone for sin. "The cup, which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"

And, now, commenced their work of cruelty. The cross was laid upon the ground. Jesus was taken, stripped of his garments, and stretched upon it. Through his hands and his feet, large spikes were driven, and deeply imbedded in the wood. What barbarity was this ! Oh ! the torture, the agony of this moment ! Blood streamed from the wounds, and anguish filled every avenue of

The robbers.

the soul. The cross was now elevated, with the sufferer upon it; and, in order to fix it more firmly in the earth, it was let fall violently into the hole dug to receive it. This produced a degree of pain, which no language can describe.

The Son of God was now hanging upon the cross—the very place, to which the malice of his enemies would have consigned him. Their plans had succeeded. They had accomplished their wish. But little did they think, that they were contributing to the accomplishment of prophecy; and, that his death would be the cause of everlasting hallelujahs of praise.

To show greater contempt for Jesus, two malefactors, were crucified at the same time. These were highway robbers, who probably had for their companion and leader, the infamous *Barabbas*.

The immediate executioners of Jesus were four soldiers, who were selected for the pur-

They part my garments.

pose. These, according to the custom of those times, divided his garments among themselves, and cast lots for his coat. This fulfilled the prophecy of the Psalmist, "They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture." (Ps. xxii. 18.) Having made this division, they seated themselves, and kept watch. This they did, for the purpose of keeping the friends of Jesus from coming to release him. In the mean time, his enemies thronged around him. There probably were to be seen the haughty scribe and pharisee, who had poured contempt upon his doctrine, and ridiculed his claims to being the Messiah. What exultation did they feel! What triumph was theirs! As they passed and repassed, they wagged their heads, by way of derision, and looking up to him, insultingly said, "If you are a king, come down from the cross"—"He pretended to be the Son of God; let God appear to deliver him, and we will believe."

Did the universe ever present another such

Reign of mercy.

scene of mockery as this? How could there be such a hiding of his power? How could he repress his indignation, which, *had* it burst forth, would have been like devouring fire? Why kindled not the anger of his Father? Why did wrath lie silent by? The answer is, that it was emphatically the time of *love*. It was the *reign of mercy*. Justice consented to retire, and suffer grace, rich overflowing grace, to accomplish its plan. This was the reason, why Jesus “endured the cross, and despised the shame.” This was the reason, why the Father prevented his wrath, from burning to the lowest hell. What will those think, who on Calvary poured forth their contempt of Jesus?—what will Pilate think, and the proud scribes and pharisees think, when they shall hereafter see Jesus coming in the clouds of heaven, and in the glory of his Father? Then they will cry to the “rocks, fall on us, and to the mountains hide us from the presence of the Lamb, and the glory of his power.”

Appeal to Jesus.

My children, so treat the Saviour yourselves, that at the day of his coming, you shall have no occasion to utter such an awful wish as this.

It was marvellous, that any could treat even an enemy, as the Jews treated Jesus on the cross. But was it not more surprising, that the *robbers* who were crucified with him, should have joined in their reproaches? Why they did so, or in what manner, we are not informed. They were among the lowest and vilest of mankind; yet they might have thought Jesus lower and viler than themselves. His meekness and humility were an object of their contempt. But, at length, the patience and fortitude of Jesus, or perhaps some impression of the Spirit of God, convinced *one* of them, that he was the Messiah. It was but a little time, that he had to reflect on his crimes, and that amidst the tortures of crucifixion; but in that time, he confessed his sins, and appealed to the mercy of the expiring Jesus for relief.

None need despair.None may presume.

In anguish and in agony, yet in faith, he cried, "Lord! remember me, when thou comest in to thy kingdom." This was enough. True repentance is ever accepted. Repentance, even in the hour of death, if genuine, will lead to glory. But from this instance, shall we *presume*? Shall we put off the day of repentance, because repentance then is *possible*? To the repentant thief the Saviour said, "To-day, shalt thou be with me in paradise." But this gives no warrant to procrastinate. It is the only recorded instance, in which pardon was extended to a person, in the hour of death. "This one instance," an old divine has well said, "was given, that none need *despair*; and but one was given, that none might *presume*."

But we have not finished the story of the love and compassion of Jesus. His enemies, I have said, clustered around his cross, mocking and deriding his pangs. While they were doing this, and even while he was bearing the sufferings of a world of guilt, lifting his eyes to

“Let the rebels live.”

heaven, he poured forth a prayer for them, “Father! forgive them, for they know not what they do.” What a miracle of love was this! What triumph over ingratitude! What glory in such divine compassion:

Hark! how he prays, (the charming sound
Dwells on his dying lips)—FORGIVE!
And every groan, and gaping wound,
Cries, “Father, let the rebels live!”

Can the glory of Jesus, think you, be augmented beyond this? Perhaps not. But mark an instance of his care and tenderness, which, had it been true of an expiring hero, would have excited greater admiration, than the proudest victory on the field of conquest. A few *friends* witnessed the dying scene. One disciple, at least, was there; and there, too, was his *mother*. In respect to this world, she was poor. She had no home. Jesus saw her—he knew the poverty of her condi-

"Behold thy mother!"

tion, and he felt it. With unspeakable tenderness, he addressed her, "Woman! behold thy son;" and turning to John, his beloved disciple, "Behold thy mother." This was the climax of filial tenderness. This the consummation of the glory of Jesus, as a son. It was enough. John understood, and welcomed the charge. From that hour, he took her to his house; and, for fifteen years, as *tradition* adds, treated her as his own mother, and the mother of his Lord.

The work of Jesus was now nearly complete. Nature itself began to declare that the issue was at hand. The sun in the heavens, the emblem of the Sun of Righteousness, sickening at the awful sight, withdrew his beams. Midnight darkness overspread the land. What an appropriate sympathy, was this in the world's great fountain of light! The poet has divinely said—

Well might the sun in darkness hide,
And shut his glories in,

“It is finished!”

When God, the mighty Maker, died
For man, the creature's sin.

Let us hasten to the conclusion. The moment, at length came, when agony had reached its height. That was the moment, in which the Father withdrew his face, and a dread eclipse passed over the Redeemer's soul. It was probably only a moment, but it extorted from him the loud wail, “My God! my God! way hast thou forsaken me!”

The darkness rolled off; and, as it rolled away, Jesus saw that his great work was done—his victory was won—his triumph was complete! With a loud voice, he proclaimed, “It is finished!” and, bowed and died.

The Prince of Life resigns his breath;
The King of Glory bows to death.

Nature again expressed her sympathy.
The earth shook and trembled, as when God

“This was the Son of God.”

came from Teman, the Holy One, from Mount Paran. Rocks burst asunder. The tabernacles of the dead were opened, and saints sleeping there, at length, after the resurrection of the Son of God, arose, and appeared unto many. Who they were, or what became of them is unknown. They might have again died; or, perhaps, were translated to heaven. Nor can we tell why they arose—perhaps, as a demonstration of the reality of the resurrection—as evidence to the Jews, that Jesus was the Messiah.

The wonders of that scene were not entirely lost. What effect those convulsions of nature had upon the enemies of Jesus, I cannot say; but the centurion and the soldiers, who watched him, saw in them the clear evidence of the relation of Jesus to the God of the universe. Under this conviction, he declared, and it was the declaration of a heathen, “Truly, this was the Son of God!”

Well might the centurion say what he did.

Will you not be grateful ?

He *was* the Son of God. And there, on the cross, he suffered what the prophet Isaiah said he should suffer : “ He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities : the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.”

My children, you owe more to Jesus, than I can tell. Had he not died, your sins could never have been pardoned. You would have gone to the grave without hope. Heaven, would, indeed, have existed ; but you could have had no place there.

But, now, you may repent, and be forgiven. And if you do repent, and believe in Jesus, peace will accompany you through life, and where he dwells, you will dwell, and behold his glory.

Will you not be grateful to him, who suffered so much for you ? Will you not open your little hearts, and bid him welcome. Will you not employ your lips, and raise high his praise :

Every creature say, Amen

What equal honors shall we bring
To thee, O Lord our God, the Lamb,
When all the notes that angels sing,
Are far inferior to thy name ?

Worthy is he that once was slain,
The Prince of Peace that groan'd and died,
Worthy to rise, and live, and reign,
At his Almighty Father's side.

Blessings forever on the Lamb,
Who bore the curse for wretched man :
Let angels sound his sacred name,
And every creature say, *Amen.*

LECTURE VI.

THE RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION.

CONTENTS.—Request of the Jews to hasten the death of Jesus. Found already dead. Proof that he was dead. Why he died, so much sooner than common. The tomb of Joseph of Arimathea. Manner in which bodies were laid in sepulchres. Measures taken by the Jews to prevent the body of Jesus from being stolen. The importance of the question, “Did Jesus rise from the dead?” Appearance of the women at the sepulchre. Arrival of Peter and John. Discovery of Jesus to Mary Magdalene. To Peter. To two disciples, on their way to Emmaus. To all the disciples, except Thomas. To them, when Thomas was present. Other appearances. Could the disciples have been deceived? Were they honest? Story of the Jews to account for his absence from the sepulchre. Ascension.

I INTENDED, when I began these Lectures, my children, to conclude them with an account of the crucifixion of Christ. But having described that solemn event, I persuade myself, that you will wish me to add some particulars about his *resurrection* and *ascension*.

But before I tell you about these two great

Hour of crucifixion.

events, I will briefly relate the circumstances, which immediately followed his death.

Jesus expired about nine o'clock in the day, as the Jews reckoned time ; or about three o'clock in the afternoon, as we reckon it. We commence our day at twelve o'clock, at night ; they began theirs at six o'clock, in the morning. At their three o'clock, or our nine in the morning, preparations began to be made for crucifying Jesus. Some suppose that he was actually suspended from the cross at our nine o'clock. This was probably not so. I cannot tell you in this place the reasons for this opinion. Preparations, as I said, began to be made about nine o'clock ; but there is reason to believe, that Jesus was not suspended upon the cross till *about* our twelve o'clock. This was six o'clock, with the Jews. Darkness from this time prevailed over all the land. It might well be supposed, that if darkness prevailed at all, it would begin at the time, that Jesus *began* to be crucified.

How long Jesus hung upon the cross.

This, I say, would better agree with our ideas of fitness, or propriety, and this admission helps to remove a difficulty, which you will observe, by comparing Mark xv. 25, with John xix. 14. Mark, it is supposed, here speaks of the time, when preparations *began to be made*, and John of the time *about which Jesus began to be suspended upon the cross*. If we are correct, Jesus hung upon the cross between three and four hours only, for he died at their nine o'clock, answering to our three o'clock in the afternoon. This was an unusually short period, for one to die by crucifixion ; for, although it was attended with great pain, persons who thus suffered often lingered two or three days, and sometimes even seven or eight days.

Jesus was crucified on Friday. The day following was our Saturday, which with the Jews was the seventh day, as they reckoned the days of the week, and was their *Sabbath*. To suffer persons to remain hung over the

Joseph of Arimathea.

Sabbath, was contrary to their practice. This was founded upon a law, which you can read in Deut. xxi. 22, 23. This law was made before crucifixion was known, but it was in practice applied to those who were crucified, as it had been to those who had been hung in the common manner. To avoid a violation of this law, it was necessary that the bodies of Jesus and the thieves should be taken down, by the time of sun-setting, since the Jewish Sabbath began at that time. The Jews therefore sent to Pilate, and requested that the legs of Jesus, and of the two thieves might be *broken*, in order to hasten their deaths, that their bodies might be taken down in season.

About the same time, or perhaps a little before, Joseph of Arimathea himself went to Pilate, and requested that the body of Jesus, when dead, might be delivered to him. This Joseph was a secret believer in Jesus, and a "just, and good man." He had opposed his

A bone shall not be broken.

crucifixion, as cruel and unjust. And, now, he was desirous of showing respect to his memory, by giving him a decent burial. To this request of Joseph, Pilate acceded, and gave him an order to take the body of Jesus, when dead.

The Jews having given the order of Pilate to the soldiers, to break the legs of Jesus and of the thieves, in order to hasten their death, they proceeded to execute it. The legs of the thieves were first broken, and they expired—but when they came to Jesus, they found him dead already, and they broke not his legs. It was foretold that they should not do it. “A bone of him shall not be broken.” (Ex. xii. 46, Ps. xxxiv. 20.)

But was he *in truth dead*? This is an important question. According to the Scriptures, he was to die. He himself said he should die; and unless he did die, he would not atone for sin. Was he, then, dead? But why ask the question? Because it is impor-

Was he dead ?

tant to establish the *proof* of the fact. He died sooner than was common. Pilate, when he heard of his death, marvelled that he should have died so soon. And some may think, that he only *fainted* or *swooned* away ; and that his friends afterwards *revived* him, and pretended that he rose from the *dead*. You see, then, how important proof is on this point.

And that proof we have—full, satisfactory proof. To the soldiers, when they came to him, he *appeared* to be dead. But one of them, to *try whether he was dead*, thrust his spear into his side. This was probably his *left* side, though it is not certain. The wound was a deep one. It is certain that it reached the *heart*, and if Jesus had not been already dead, it would have killed him. But how is it known that the spear reached the heart ? From this fact, that blood and water, or something which bore the appearance of water, flowed from the wound. The heart of every person is surrounded by a kind of *sack* or *bag*.

Whom they have pierced.

This sack is called the *pericardium*, and contains a *thin liquor*, which resembles water. The heart itself contains *blood*. Now observe, the spear pierced through this sack, from which flowed the *water*, and penetrated the heart, from which flowed the *blood*.

This act of the soldier, fulfilled the prophecy, (Zech. xii. 10,) "They shall look upon him whom they have *pierced*:" and, moreover, it established the point, that Jesus was in truth dead; for if he was not already dead, that spear would have killed him: so that we are sure that Jesus did *die*, and doubtless he was dead, when the soldier pierced him. The apostle John tells us, that he himself was present, and saw the soldier pierce his side, and that he saw the blood and water flow forth, and that he was sure he was not deceived. (John xix. 35.) Doubtless all these circumstances were ordered by Providence, that the enemies of Christ might not have it to say that he did not die: and this they *never* *preten-*

Why Jesus died so soon.

ded. There was full proof of his death, and they could not dispute the fact.

But it may be interesting to inquire, "How came Jesus to die in a period so much shorter than usual?" It is easy to assign sufficient reasons. Through the whole preceding night, he had had no sleep—he had been weakened by his agony in the garden—had been scourged by Pilate—had been mocked and buffeted by the soldiers—had been obliged to bear his cross, under which he fainted—and more than all, had travailed in sorrow for a world of sinners—and under such sorrow as no language can describe. And, then, there is no evidence that he had tasted food, from the time he left the chamber in Jerusalem, where he had eaten the Passover, with his disciples. Who will wonder that he died so soon? Who rather will not wonder that nature held out, and held on in her course, *so long*?

Having received the body of Jesus from the soldiers, Joseph wrapped it in a clean linen

Embalming.

cloth, and around the body he placed about an hundred pounds weight of myrrh, aloes, and other spices. In this, he was assisted by Nicodemus, who was also a secret believer in Christ, as the Messiah. This was the same Nicodemus, with whom Jesus once had a conversation, an account of which you may read in John iii. 1, and onward. The object of these spices was to preserve the body; and when done with care, was called *embalming*. At this time, it was evidently done in haste, as the day was far spent.

With this hasty preparation, the body was removed to a tomb, or sepulchre in a garden belonging to Joseph, in which it was deposited. This tomb was a new one, and no corpse as yet had been laid in it. It was doubtless designed for Joseph himself, it being not uncommon for wealthy Jews in their life-time, to have sepulchres prepared for themselves. And, besides, this fulfilled a remarkable prophecy, which you will find in Isa. liii. 9. This

Sepulchre.

passage bishop Lowth translates : “ He made his grave with the *wicked* ; but with the *rich man* was his tomb :” i. e. His crucifiers would endeavor to bury him with the *wicked malefactors* : but a rich man would furnish a tomb. How wonderful the prophecy ! How exact the fulfilment ! And this prophecy, children, was written seven hundred years before Christ died.

I must add a few words more about this sepulchre. It was hewn out of solid rock. It was a large under-ground room. Sepulchres in those days, were often much larger than is commonly supposed. That of David was more than one hundred feet in length, and was divided into several apartments. The one in which Jesus was laid might have been less, but was capable of containing several persons. The bodies of deceased persons were laid in places, in the sides of the sepulchres, called *niches*. In one of these the body of our Lord was laid. These sepulchres had

Resting in the tomb.

but one entrance, which being rendered secure, no access could be had to them. For the purpose of securing the body of Jesus, Joseph, doubtless with the assistance of his friends, rolled a large stone over the entrance-way of his sepulchre, which having done, he departed.

Jesus was now dead. The malice of his enemies had persecuted him through life. From the very time that he had entered upon his public ministry, he had enjoyed little peace, by reason of the envy and hatred of the scribes and pharisees. That envy and hatred had brought him to the cross. But, at length, he rested quietly in the tomb. Quietly, did we say? The grave is, indeed, generally a *resting* place. There it is said, even "the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest."

In one respect, it was so with the Redeemer. His enemies did not, and could not, now trouble him. But they were troubled about

Watch set.Stone sealed.

him. They recollected, what he had said, that on the third day he would rise again. They therefore repaired to Pilate, and made known to him their fears—not that he would rise, but that his *disciples would steal his body* from the sepulchre, and pretend that he *had* risen. Hence they requested Pilate, that the sepulchre might, in some way, be made sure. Pilate himself felt interested in the result; and, accordingly, told the Jews to take such part of the band of soldiers as they wished, for a watch, and to make all things as secure as they were able. Thus directed, they set a sufficient watch, and, moreover, put a seal upon the stone: perhaps the public seal of Pilate, which no man might venture to break.

Matters were thus arranged, as the very enemies of Jesus wished. They were satisfied, that he was dead: they knew that he was in the tomb: they had provided against the approach of his friends: a large stone closed the only entrance—a seal was affixed to it—

Did Jesus rise ?

and a guard of thirty men watched around. What greater care could they have taken? How could they have been more sure?

Now, then, "Did Jesus rise from the dead?"

A more important question than this, my children, has not been asked, since time began. Shall we even make the supposition, that Jesus did not rise from the dead? Ah! if he did not, what hope can we have? None; no, not the least. This the apostle Paul has decided. He says, (1 Cor. xv. 16, 17,) "If the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised; and if Christ is not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins." The apostle means, that if Christ rose not from the dead, our hope of pardon from God is vain. My children, if Christ rose not from the dead, the Bible is of no value—it may contain many wise maxims; but, then, whether any of the children of men can be saved, we know not. Every thing depends upon the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. If he was not raised, we have no

If he rose not—

evidence that we shall be raised. We know that we shall go to the grave. Death is certain. And certain it is, that one day the clods of the valley will cover us ! but if Christ rose not, the grave is indeed a gloomy place. If he rose not—

Silence, and solitude, and gloom,
In those forgetful realms appear ;
Deep sorrows fill the dismal tomb,
And hope shall never enter there.

Indeed, if Christ rose not, of what value is the Bible ? You possess it, but why are you, on this account, better off, than those that have it not ? And why spend money to send it to the little children, who live on the banks of the Ganges, and the Nile ? If Jesus rose not, they are as well off as you are, in all their darkness and ignorance.

You perceive then the importance of the question, “ Did Jesus rise from the dead ? ”

Women at the sepulchre.

I have not said these things—I have not asked these questions, because I think there is *any doubt* on the subject. No, there is full and satisfactory evidence, that he *did* rise triumphant over all his foes, as he said he would. But I have put these questions, that you might think of the importance of the subject, and so examine it as to have your minds well settled upon this cardinal doctrine of the Christian religion.

Again, then, I ask the question, “Did Jesus rise from the dead?”

Now, then, on the third day after he was crucified, very early in the morning, it is certain that his body was no longer in the sepulchre. I say it is certain, for, at that time, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses, Salome, and Joanna, came to the sepulchre, and found there an angel, who declared to them that Jesus had risen from the sepulchre. They saw that the stone was rolled from the entrance. They were invited

Earthquake.

to enter in, and see where the Lord had lain. And they did see, and he was not there.

But you may ask, why were these women so early at the sepulchre? They were at the sepulchre, when Jesus was laid in it, by Joseph of Arimathea. They knew that the work of embalming him had been hastily done. More spices were necessary; or at least, further operations were necessary to preserve the body. They had bought more spices, and with these they came early to the sepulchre, for the benevolent purpose of completing the embalming process.

But, on their arrival, what did they behold? The watch was no longer there. A little previously, there had been an earthquake. It was a demonstration of the power of God. It was the signal, that Jesus was bursting the barriers of the grave, and was rising from the dead. It was a sudden and terrific event to the guard, watching around the sepulchre of Jesus. At the same instant, that the earth-

Descent of an angel.

quake occurred, an angel from heaven alighted upon the place, rolled back the stone, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment as white as snow. In terror and dismay, the keepers, that is the guard, did shake, and became as dead men. In their alarm, they probably fainted. At this time, Jesus probably rose, came out of the sepulchre, passed away, and they saw him not. On recovering, the guard naturally fled from the place; soon after which the women made their appearance, and seeing the stone rolled from the entrance they entered in, where they saw the vision of angels, who told them that Jesus was not there, but had risen, as he said he would.

When these women first approached the sepulchre, Mary Magdalene was with them. But, it is supposed, that seeing the stone rolled away, she immediately left the other women, and ran to the city, a distance of half a mile, to inform the disciples of this wonderful circumstance.

Peter and John running.

After her departure, the other women, as I told you, entered into the sepulchre, where they saw the angels, who bid them go and tell his disciples, that Jesus had risen, and would see them in Galilee, as he had before told them.

These women accordingly left the sepulchre, and proceeded towards the city, to do as the angels had bid them.

While they were gone, Mary Magdalene returned to the sepulchre, following Peter and John, who came running. (John xx. 2—9.) It seems she had told them, what she had seen, and that they in their surprise and ardor ran towards the sepulchre, leaving Mary to follow, as she was able. On their arrival, they entered into the sepulchre, and examined it. The body of Jesus was not there. They saw, however, the linen clothes lying there in order. But they knew not what to think. The angels appear not to have been seen by them. Wondering what these things could

They have taken him away.

mean, they left the sepulchre and returned to the city. (John xx. 10.)

Mary Magdalene was now left alone. There she stood by the sepulchre, and there poured forth her tears. She knew not what to make of these things. Jesus, whom she had loved, was taken away; a mystery which she could not solve hung round the affair, and damped all her joy. While thus weeping, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre. What was her surprise to observe two angels, who kindly asked her, why she wept. She replied, that she was seeking her Lord, who had been taken away, and she knew not where they had laid him. Where they had *laid* him! Had Mary then no suspicion that he had risen? Probably not. Jesus had, indeed, often told his *disciples*, that he should rise from the dead; but they seem not to have *understood* him. Much less, probably, did *Mary* dream of such an event.

While thus talking with the angels, turning

"Mary!"

herself for a moment, she saw some one standing not far distant from her. It was *Jesus* himself. But she knew him not. But how was this? Not know him? Not know one, whom she had known so intimately, and so long! Why she did not recognize him, I cannot certainly say. One reason doubtless was, she did not expect to see him alive, and may be his countenance was changed, by his sufferings and death. She supposed him to be the *gardener* of Joseph, and accordingly inquired of him, whether he had taken him away; and if so, where he had laid him?

At this moment, Jesus said unto her, "*Mary!*" It was pronounced in his well known, kind, and affectionate voice. This was enough. Instantly did she recognize him, and would have fallen at his feet to embrace him. But he said to her, Mary, "*touch me not*"—that is, do not *wait* to prostrate yourself at my feet, in any act of worship, or regard. It will be sometime before I ascend to

Appears to Peter.

my Father, and you will have opportunity to manifest towards me your love and affection ; but hasten now, and tell my disciples, that I have risen, and shall bye and bye ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.” (John xx. 16, 17.) Mary did as she was directed. She told the disciples, but they believed her not.

What an honor was here put upon *Mary* ! She was the first to whom Jesus discovered himself, after his resurrection. Not long after, he appeared to the other women, also, on their return from the city, whither they went, as I told you, to inform his disciples, that they had seen the stone of the sepulchre rolled away. (Mat. xxviii. 8.)

Next, Jesus appeared to Peter. (Luke xxiv. 34.) This was before Jesus had appeared to any of the other disciples. (1 Cor. xv. 5.) How kind this was in the Redeemer, considering how grievously Peter denied his Lord and Master. It showed how willing he was

To two disciples.

to pardon his disciple, who he knew had wept bitterly over his crime, and how ready, too, to administer comfort to all who are sincerely penitent.

During the same day, towards evening, Jesus appeared to two disciples, as they were proceeding from Jerusalem to Emmaus, a village between seven and eight miles from the city. The name of one of these was Cleopas, the name of the other is unknown. As these disciples were walking along, and conversing about the wonderful events, which had happened in Jerusalem. Jesus himself overtook them. They knew him not, for he appeared in a different form, from usual. (Mark xvi. 12.) He enquired of them about what they were conversing, which rendered them so sad. They expressed their surprise that he could be ignorant, for said Cleopas, "If you are only a stranger in Jerusalem, you might well have learned what has taken place."

Discovers who he is.

Jesus inquiring to what events he referred, Cleopas told him the story, and when he had finished, Jesus, without disclosing who it was, made them acquainted with what the old Testament contained respecting the Messiah—how he should suffer, and die, and rise again. All this they perceived to be true of Jesus of Nazareth, and they evidently began to be satisfied, that he was indeed the Messiah.

They had now reached the village, whither they were going; and as they were about entering the house, at which they were to stop, Jesus kept on, apparently intending to proceed further. They urged him, however, to go in, and tarry with them. This invitation he accepted. Not long after, supper having been provided, he took his seat with them at the table, upon which taking bread in a solemn manner, he blessed it, and break, and gave it to them. They immediately knew who it was. Jesus himself instantly left the house. They were satisfied, that it was their Lord

Sudden appearance.

and Master. They talked over the subject, and referred to the deep interest, which they had taken in the things, which he had said to them, by the way. They could not rest satisfied to remain where they were. It was now night ; but such was their joy, that they rose up the same hour, and hastened to Jerusalem, to tell the disciples.

On their arrival, they found the disciples and some others together, conversing about the appearance of Jesus to Simon Peter. Their story was soon related, and doubtless served to add to their joy and wonder. They had indeed strong evidence, that he was alive again, and yet could it be so ? While they were pondering upon these things, Jesus suddenly stood in the midst of them. The doors were shut, and perhaps fastened for fear of the Jews. This last, however, is not certain ; the doors might only have been closed, and Jesus might have so suddenly opened them, as to have spread terror among them.

Invites examination.

For a time, they supposed him to be a spirit. But he proceeded to remove their doubts, by showing to them his hands and his feet, which still bore the marks of the nails, which had fastened him to the cross. He invited them to examine him, and thus to satisfy themselves, that he was indeed alive again. All this did not satisfy them. They believed not "*for joy.*" To furnish them with still more convincing proof, that he was no spirit, he ate in their presence a piece of broiled fish, and some honey comb. He now reminded them of the words, he had said to them, before his crucifixion, relative to his rising again—that this event, as well as the subject of his sufferings and death, was predicted in the Scriptures, and it was necessary that all these things should be fulfilled.

At this interview, Thomas, one of the disciples, appears not to have been present. The others told him, however, what they had seen, and that it was certainly Jesus himself.

Doubts of Thomas removed.

However, he believed not. Whether he was not as easily convinced, as some other men, I cannot say ; but he told his fellow disciples, that before *he* should believe, he must see in the hands of Jesus, the print of the nails, and put his fingers into them, and thrust his hand into his side. You may wonder why Thomas was so reluctant to believe. But it was well that he was so. It was a point of great importance *to prove* that Christ had actually risen from the dead.

Eight days after the above interview, that is on the next Christian Sabbath, Thomas had an opportunity of removing all his doubts. The disciples were again together, and again Jesus came, and stood in the midst of them. Turning to Thomas, he invited him to examine for himself—"reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands ; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side, and no longer doubt." The effect upon Thomas was such, as might have been expected. He felt con-

Other appearances.

vinced, he felt satisfied, and in the midst of his surprise, and conviction, and joy, he exclaimed: "My Lord! and my God!"

The disciples were now convinced; but that no doubt might remain—and especially, that the evidence might be satisfactory in all periods of time, Jesus remained some time longer upon the earth, and on divers occasions showed himself to his disciples, and other followers. I will just name the instances—to Peter, Thomas, Nathanael, James, and John, and two others, at the sea of Tiberias. (John xxi. 1—14.)

To the disciples on a mountain of Galilee. (Mat. xxviii. 16.)

To more than five hundred brethren at once. (1 Cor. xv. 6.)

To James, one of the apostles. (1 Cor. xv. 7.)

To all the apostles assembled together. (1 Cor. xv. 7.)

To the apostles, at his ascension. (Luke xxiv. 51, Acts i. 9, 10.)

Were the Apostles deceived ?

Here, then, my children, is the evidence which we have, that Christ rose from the dead, after his crucifixion. This is by no means, *all the proof*, which we have. But I ask, is not this *enough* ?

But you say, perhaps, that the apostles, after all, might have been deceived. *Deceived !* But how could that be ? Had but *one* of them seen Jesus, we might well doubt. Or, had they *all* seen him but *once*, we might doubt. But they saw him on *several occasions*—they saw him *together* and *separately*—they saw him not only at *night*, but in the *day-time*—they *conversed* with him—*eat* with him—*handled* and *examined* him—he continued to show himself, at different times, for *forty days* in succession. How then could they be deceived ?

But, were they *honest* ? Have they told us a fair story of what they actually saw ? What motive could they have had to deceive mankind ? No, my children, it is sufficient proof, that they were honest, and told the truth, that

Were they honest ?

they suffered incredible hardships, in after life, and yet no one of them ever relented. They were persecuted, afflicted, tormented, and finally murdered ; and, yet, to their dying day, and dying moments, they insisted that they had told the truth, and nothing but the truth. When you are older, you must examine this subject, and you will find more reason to believe that Christ actually rose from the dead, than you have that there is such a place as Rome, or such a river as the Ganges.

But did not the *Jews* say that the *disciples came and stole the body of Jesus from the sepulchre* ?

Yes, they did say so. But what evidence had they of this ? One thing they admitted, that on the morning of the third day after Jesus was crucified, his body was missing from the sepulchre. Of this fact, there could be no doubt. Now, then, let us see how they attempted to *prove* that the disciples stole his body.

Story of the Jews

The watch, I told you, on the appearance of the angel, and the occurrence of the earthquake, were for a time, overwhelmed with awe, and amazement; or perhaps they swooned away. On recovering, they hastened to the city, and made known the things they had seen. The Jewish council was immediately assembled. (Mat. xxviii. 12.) The question now was, what should be done. The body was gone. The soldiers, perhaps, knew not by what means Jesus had left the tomb; but they did know that *they* had not taken it away, and they knew, moreover, that the *disciples* had not. This last was impossible. It would have been death to any one to have attempted it. But, no other story, would for a moment, be believed. The Jewish leaders, therefore, *bribed* the soldiers to conceal the truth, and to affirm, what they knew to be false. You must say that the disciples came and stole him away, while *we slept*.

What a *wicked* and *ridiculous* expedient this

Wicked and weak.

was. It was death to any sentinel to sleep on his post. The soldiers told this to the council. The council replied, "True—but do you say this, and if Pilate hears of it, and threatens to put you to death, we will come forward and persuade him to *pardon* you."

This was both wicked, and weak. It was wicked because it was false; and it was weak, because, if the soldiers were *asleep*, as they pretended, *how should they know* whether the disciples or any one else, took the body of Jesus. Do men *see* objects around them?—do they know what takes place, while they are *asleep*? The story was too obviously false; and, withal, too mean and wicked, ever to be extensively believed. It was, indeed, reported in after years by the enemies of Jesus; but that religion which was preached by the apostles in his name, spread far and wide—converts were multiplied and thousands bowed to the doctrines of the cross.

I will only add, in this place, that at the ex-

Ascension.

piration of forty days, Jesus assembling his disciples, conducted them to the eastern side of the Mount of Olives, to the village of Bethany, which was situated there, and having given them his final instructions, he lifted up his hands, and pronounced his divine blessing upon them.

This was the parting signal. The moment of separation had arrived. "Lo, I am with you," said he, "to the end of the world"—and as the gracious words proceeded out of his mouth, a cloud was seen descending, which was to be his charriot to the realms of glory above. In a moment following, he was seen ascending, and as he went up, his disciples poured forth a song of praise to him, and doubtless sought in prayer, the fulfillment of his gracious promise, that he would, indeed, be with them, and with all his faithful disciples, till the end of time ; and the fulfillment of another promise, that in a little time, he would

A song for children.

come and take them to dwell with him, that
they might behold his glory.

Methinks they sung :

Master, (may we ever say,)
Taken from the world away,
See thy faithful servants, see,
Ever gazing up to thee ;
Grant, though parted from our sight,
High above yon azure height,—
Grant our souls may thither rise—
Following thee beyond the skies.

My children, let us sing, as they sung ; and
to that song let us add, what may Christ enable us to accomplish :

Ever upward let us move,
Wafted on the wings of love ;
Looking when our Lord shall come—
Looking for a happier home :
There we shall with thee remain,
Partners of thy endless reign ;
There thy face unclouded see—
Find a heav'n of heav'ns in thee.

LECTURE VII.

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

CONTENTS.—Manner in which Christ ascended. His welcome into heaven. Joy and grief of the disciples. Jesus still lives in heaven. Heaven a blessed place. Society of heaven. Will children ever reach heaven? What they must do, for that purpose. Heaven a holy place, and those that go thither must be holy also. Children may die soon. Their souls of immortal value. The soul not to be sacrificed for the world. A source of great danger. Never be ashamed of Christ.

My last lecture concluded with a brief account of the ascension of Jesus to heaven. That ascension was made in open day, and in the presence of all the apostles. I told you that he ascended in a cloud. You may wonder how he could be borne up by a cloud. The cloud was not essential. He that could walk upon the waves without sinking—he that could silence those waves, when raging tumultuously—he that need only speak and

Entrance of Jesus into heaven.

the dead rose from the grave—he that had all power in heaven and on earth, how easily could he ascend by that power, through the air to heaven. But that cloud doubtless added to the sublimity of the scene.

What a solemn sight! How full of grandeur and glory! His great work accomplished—his triumph forever complete, and now passing, as it were, in a triumphal charriot to the throne of his glory. Who can tell the wonders of his entrance into the eternal city of holiness and joy. Ah! how many thousands and tens of thousands of saints and angels welcomed his approach. That was a glorious day, and that the most joyful occasion known, even in the annals of heaven itself. Angels and archangels bowed before him—principalities and powers did him homage—all heaven united in swelling loud and wide the joyful song: “Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in!”

Joy in the bosom of the disciples.

What a contrast between heaven and earth. All was joy above, all was—shall we say *grief* below? No, by no means. There was joy even in the bosom of his disciples, sad and sorrowful as they felt. Why should there not have been? It was indeed, hard for them to part with him. They had long loved him, and long had he watched over them; and, now, what could they do without his presence and support? But these they would still have. “I will not leave you comfortless,” he had said to them, “but I will come to you, and make my abode with you.” And on his departure, the last words he had said to them, were, “Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world.”

Could they then grieve?—could they despond?—could they fear? Doubts now vanished. It was all plain to them, that he was the Son of God, and they his honored and commissioned servants, to advance a kingdom which he had founded by his blood. Instead

Jesus now in heaven.

therefore, of repining, they returned to Jerusalem, “with great joy;” (Luke xxiv. 52;) and entering the temple, employed themselves in “praising and blessing God.”

It is now, my children, about eighteen hundred years, since Christ ascended from Mount Olivet to heaven. During this long period, there he has resided on the throne of his Father. And there he still is. Yes; at the very moment, that you are perusing these lines, Jesus is in heaven, dwelling in glory, which no mortal eye could see, and live. And he is there, too, in a *bodily* form. When he was parted from his disciples, he went up with the same body, which was crucified; and with which he rose from the sepulchre. Before he reached heaven, that body was *changed*. What that change was, I cannot tell. But it became a *spiritual* body. It was something *like* to the body, which he had on earth; only it is inconceivably beautiful and glorious. Nothing in the universe can probably compare

Heaven a glorious place.

with it ; and there, in this spiritual body, and on his throne of glory, Jesus dwells in heaven and there—

Adoring saints around him stand,
And thrones and powers before him fall ;
The God shines gracious through the man,
And sheds sweet glories on them all.

Ah ! my children, what a glorious and blessed place must heaven be ! Under the idea of a city, the apostle John has told us something about it. No language can adequately describe it ; nor can I, or you even imagine the glories, which belong to it. Think of a city, whose foundations are garnished with precious stones. Its wall is jasper ; its buildings pure and pellucid gold ; its gates pearl ; its watchmen angels. And in the midst of it is the throne of God ; and out of that throne flows the river of life, and, on the banks of it, blossoms the tree of immortality. No temple stands there ; but the city itself is the tem-

Society of heaven.

ple of the living God. No moon shines there; no sun sheds abroad his beams; and yet, no darkness dims, and no clouds obscure. God himself is the great sun, who shines forth in one cloudless and eternal day.

And, then, think what *society* is there!—Jesus himself the great fountain of life and joy! and there, too, are the angels, those noble, and holy, and happy spirits, who, on the morning of the creation, sung their anthem of praise; and, on the plains of Bethlehem, tuned their hymn of delight—growing old, and yet blooming with eternal youth; glowing with a pure, serene, and intense flame of love.

And there, too, are the *saints* ransomed with the blood of Jesus, dressed in their robes of life and glory—filled with the fulness of God, and singing with new and ever increasing delight—“Unto him who hath loved us, and washed us in his blood, to him be glory forever and ever.” In that delighted and blessed throng, you would see, were you there, Abra-

Do you wish to go to heaven ?

ham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and there, too, you might see Moses, and David, and Paul, and an innumerable company, which no man can number.

My children, have you had a father, and is he dead, and was he a Christian ? You would see him there also. Perhaps your mother is dead, and there she may be too, and there also you may have a brother, or a sister. But whether this be so or not, there are thousands and tens of thousands of little spirits, like your own, who are beholding the glories of the Redeemer, and are helping to swell loud and high his praises.

And have you no wish, my children, to join them ? To see what they see, and love as they love ? Do you not sometimes ask :

When shall the day, dear Lord, appear,
That I shall mount to dwell above ;
And stand, and bow, and worship there,
And view thy face, and sing, and love ?

What you must do then.

Ah! when will that day come? When will you be there? *Perhaps*—perhaps, *never*.

“But did not Christ die for *me*?” you ask.

Yes, he died for *you*; he died for *all*. But, then, my children, if you ever reach heaven, you have something *to do*. You are young; but you have already sinned, more than I can tell; and before you can go to heaven, you must *repent*. This Jesus Christ has himself told you. What Christ has done, is not that you may go to heaven, without repenting; but if you do repent. God forgives all, and accepts of all, who are sincerely sorry for the evil they have done, and who turn from it, and do so no more. This is repentance. But another thing you must do. You must *believe* in Christ. I do not mean by this simply, that you must believe that he once lived on earth, and died on the cross. This you may believe, and yet never reach heaven. But what I mean is, that you must *love* and *confide in him*, and if you do love him, and con-

The inhabitants of heaven holy.

fide in him, in the sense I mean, you will *endeavor to please him*. You will do, as he has said. You will shun sin, because *he hates it*; and because *it is hateful*. You will love that which is good or holy, because *he loves it*; and *because it is good*.

The inhabitants of heaven are all holy beings. There is not one who loves sin, or who would do the least wrong. There is no falsehood in heaven—not an unkind word—not an angry look—not a reproachful feeling. The most perfect harmony and love prevail. All unite in doing good one to another—every one delights to see those around him, as happy, and even happier than himself. There is not a selfish feeling throughout all heaven—not one that covets, what does not belong to him, and which it is not perfectly right for him to desire.

And it is because the inhabitants of heaven feel thus, and act thus, that heaven is so delightful and desirable an abode. Hence you

Children may soon die.

see my children, that ere you can join that blessed assembly, or are fitted to dwell in that delightful country, you must become in the feelings of your hearts, like to them. Now, you are not like them. You know that you are not; you feel that you are not. Your little hearts are false, and selfish—and an hundred other bad things I might, in truth, say about them, and until these hearts are *changed*, you cannot go to heaven.

And, yet, you may die, and you may die *soon*. It is not certain that you will live another week, or another day. With such hearts as you have, you would be afraid to die, and well you might fear; for with such hearts, you could have no hope of being happy forever.

Now, then, my children, what ought you to do? Will you still live in sin? Will you grow up wicked men, and wicked women? Grow up! You may not live, as I told you, to grow up; but should you, would you spend your whole lives in sin?

Are you not anxious?

Tell me, children, have you no regard for the welfare of your precious souls? Do you know what it is to lose them? What it is to be excluded forever from the society of Jesus, and the holy inhabitants of heaven, and to be sent away into the dark and gloomy prison of despair? From that prison there is no escape, and within its walls, joy never lights up a smile, and mercy itself never excites a hope. Indeed, my children,

In that lone land of deep despair,
No Sabbath's heavenly light shall rise ;
No God regard your bitter prayer,
Nor Saviour call you to the skies.

Are you, again I ask—can you be indifferent to the welfare of your souls? Those souls will never die. God has decided, that they shall live forever. An eternity, then, of joy or of sorrow, is before you. Have you ever seriously thought of this? Did you ever think what must be the value of that soul,

What must heaven be ?

which may increase in knowledge, and holiness, and joy, forever and ever ?

Yet, you have such a soul, and it has all that value, which I have here supposed. If, at last, it belongs to Christ—if you shall have repented of sin—if you shall have put your trust in him, and shall have walked with him in a humble and obedient life, you will, at length, ascend where he reigns, and behold his glory. You will sing his praises in the temple of glory, with all who have been ransomed by his blood, and with the innumerable company of angels, who have maintained their love and attachment to God.

What a society will this be to dwell with ! Think of it. What must it be to see Gabriel himself!—what to talk with the patriarchs and prophets of ancient times, and to learn from their lips, what they have known—and what they have felt of the manifold goodness of God. How improving—how delightful must such society be !

Why many lose heaven.

Nor is this all—you may, perhaps, see the wonders of God's wisdom and glory, as they are displayed in other worlds. If the opinion be correct, that our day of judgment will affect only the solar system, and this may be true, one part of your delightful employment through eternity, may be, to study the works of God, and through them to obtain higher and higher knowledge of his power, goodness, wisdom, and love—and while you are thus increasing in the knowledge of God, you will be growing more holy, more lovely, more like God himself.

And now, my children, if heaven be thus desirable, will you not give all diligence to secure it, for yourselves? Hundreds and thousands lose heaven, through their supreme love of this world. They are unwilling to forsake all for Christ. They think more of a few day's earthly joy, than an eternity of solid bliss—more of a bubble, which may burst at any moment, than of a crown of immortal glory. My

What can the world do?

children, you are in danger of loving this world to your eternal ruin. Things around you look bright and happy. You suspect no danger, and you yield your hearts to the enjoyment of earthly good. Ere you are aware, the world becomes your idol. In the love and enjoyment of it, you forget your souls—you forget heaven—you forget Christ—you almost forget that you were born to die. Thus perhaps, you live; and, when death comes, you have nothing to rest upon, but the world only. In that hour, what can the world do for you? You may have the honors and the titles of the greatest earthly monarch—and you may have the wealth of the Indies—what will they profit you? They cannot stay death a single moment, nor purchase the pardon of a single sin. If then, in that dread hour, you have no other source of comfort, and no other dependance but the world, you will be poor and wretched indeed. This has been the melancholy condition of thousands, and you are in danger of the same.

Religion no weak concern.

But there is one other danger, against which I would warn you. It is this. You will be told, that to become religious is the mark of a *weak* mind. You will be advised to act like *men*—not to weep—not to fear—not to pray—not to concern yourself about death, or a future world. These things, you will be told, belong to persons of weak and sickly minds.

But, my children, against such folly and impiety, be on your guard. What! is religion a *weak* concern? Is the Bible a foolish tale? Is it a mark of weakness to be afraid of that God, “who is a consuming fire?” Is it childish to be sorry when we have done wrong? Is humility dishonorable? Is a life devoted to God deserving of contempt and ridicule? When you read of the piety and zeal of Abraham, and Moses, and David, and Paul, do they appear weak? Was Newton a weak man? Was Wilberforce? Was president Dwight? Or Payson, or Evarts, or a thousand others, whom I could name?

Never be ashamed of Jesus

Were these weak men? One might well blush at the weakness of the suggestion, that they were weak, and deeper might one blush at the suggestion, that religion itself is a weak concern.

Finally, my children, let me exhort you, in every situation and in every circumstance of life, to entertain high and exalted sentiments towards the Lord Jesus Christ. He is worthy of all your admiration, all your love, all your service. Enlist yourselves in his cause. It is a nobler cause than any other in the present world; and "it will ultimately prevail, it will finally triumph." Of Jesus and his cause you need never be ashamed. But if at any time you are so tempted, ask yourselves, in the justly admired words of the poet :

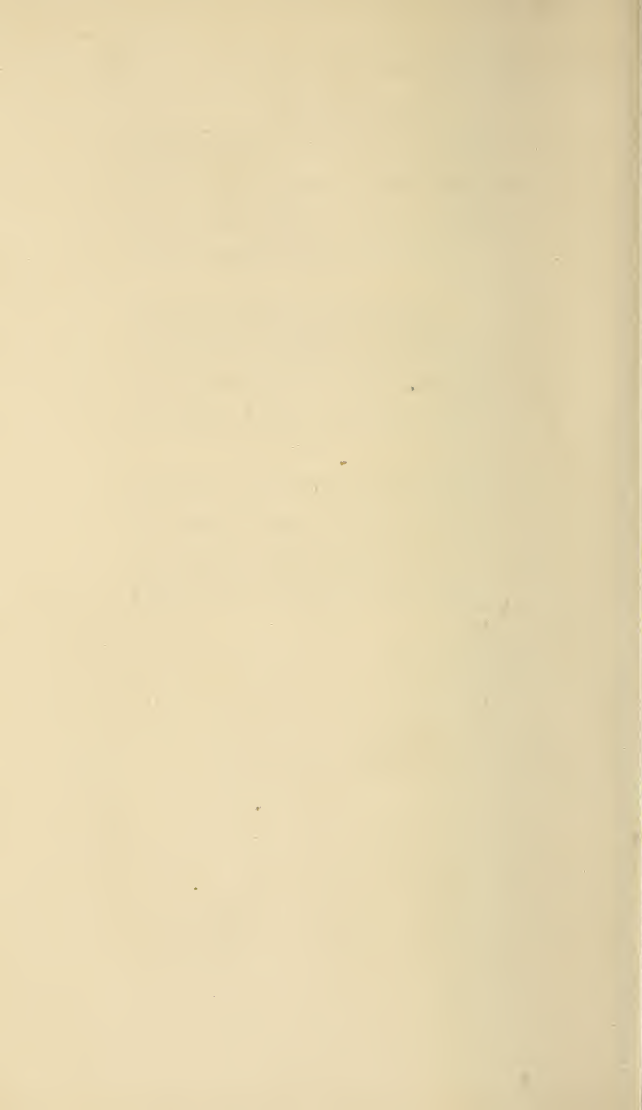
Jesus ! and shall it ever be,
A mortal man ashamed of thee !
Ashamed of thee, whom angels praise,
Whose glories shine thro' endless days ?

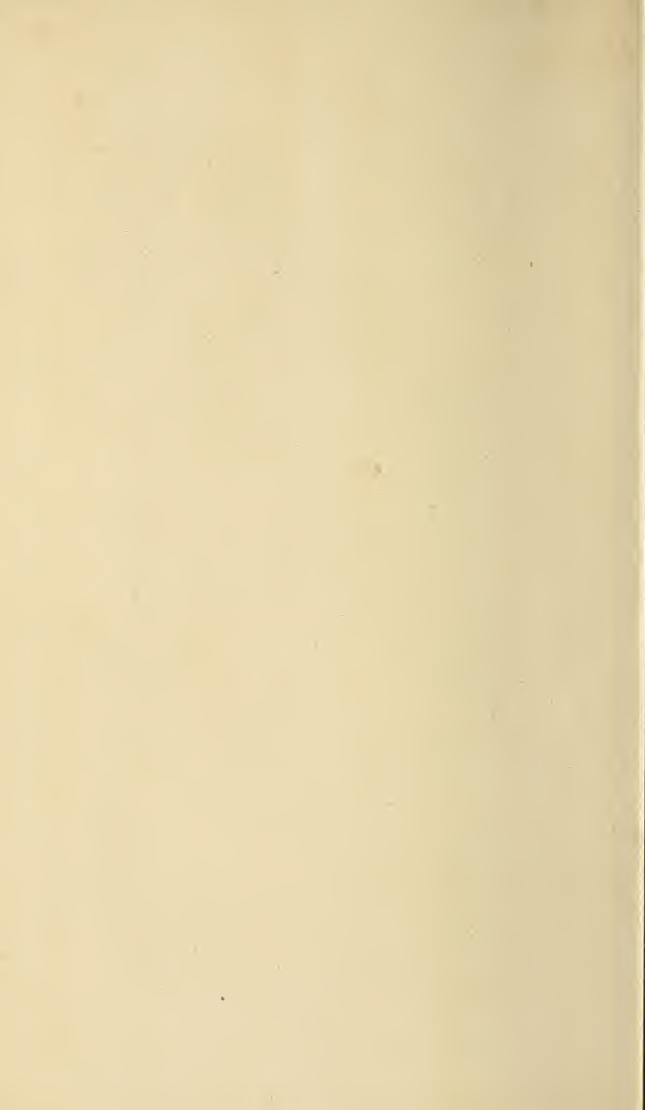
Boast a Saviour slain!

Ashamed of Jesus ! that dear friend
On whom my hopes of heav'n depend !
No ! when I blush, be this my shame,
That I no more revere his name.

Asham'd of Jesus ! yes, I may,
When I've no guilt to wash away—
No tear to wipe—no good to crave—
No fear to quell—no soul to save.

Till then—nor is my boasting vain—
Till then, I boast a Saviour slain !
And oh, may this my glory be,
That Christ is not ashamed of me.





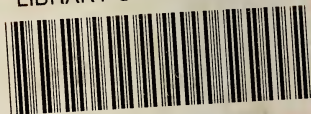
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